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TWO READINGS IN PAPYRUS BODMER II

EDGAR R. SMOTHERS, S.J.
WEST BADEN COLLEGE
WEST BADEN SPRINGS, INDIANA

PAPYRUS BODMER II has come quietly into a world stunned a little with ever fresh discoveries of ancient monuments. New Testament students know, indeed, that they are enriched with a very precious accession to their store of manuscripts. We have never possessed before so large a portion of any Gospel, so well preserved, from so early a date, as we now have, thanks to Victor Martin's distinguished editing, in these fourteen chapters of the Gospel according to St. John, copied about the year 200.[1]

The text of P^{66} — to adopt the official siglum — is yet to be adequately collated, analyzed and assessed.[2] We know already that it lies well within the broad current of our usual tradition. No prejudice need be done to more extensive studies by an examination confined to two singular readings of peculiar interest.

John vii, 52

During the Feast of the Tabernacles, the hostility of the Pharisees to Jesus rose to such a pitch that Nicodemus interposed a mild demur, to which they replied: Ἐραύνησον καὶ ἴδε ὅτι ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας προφήτης οὐκ ἐγείρεται.

[1] Papyrus Bodmer II: Évangile de Jean, chap. 1–14, edited by Victor Martin, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana V (Geneva, 1956).

[2] Among the studies already published, the writer is especially indebted to the following: K. Aland, "Papyrus Bodmer II: Ein erste Bericht," Theologische Literaturzeitung, LXXXII (Leipzig, 1957), coll. 161–183; C. K. Barrett, "Papyrus Bodmer II: A Preliminary Report," Expository Times, LXVI (Edinburgh, 1957), 174–177; M. E. Boismard, "Le Papyrus Bodmer II," Revue Biblique, LXXIV (Jerusalem, 1957), 363–398; B. Brinkmann, "Eine Papyrus-Handschrift des Johannesevangeliums aus dem 2. Jahrhundert?" Scholastik, XXXII (Freiburg/Br., 1957), 399–410; A. J. Klijn, "Papyrus Bodmer II (John i–xiv) and the Text of Egypt," New Testament Studies, III (Cambridge, 1957), 327–334; I. de la

From this, the text of Westcott and Hort, there are two minor variants in P^{66} which are not singular. One is the form of the opening verb, the other a matter of word order. The latter was at first identical in the papyrus with that of the editors and of the Vaticanus; but it was altered to the order found in the Sinaiticus and in the *textus receptus*. With the correction, we read as follows: Ἐρεύνησον καὶ ἴδε ὅτι ὁ προφήτης ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας οὐκ ἐγείρεται.

Nothing here is peculiar to the papyrus except the article with προφήτης.[3] The universal omission of it in other manuscripts has naturally led to its omission in the printed editions. Yet one modern scholar has suggested restoring it by simple conjecture.[4] To find it now, in the oldest manuscript of all, is challenging.

The common text presents a serious difficulty; for there was a prophet who came from Galilee, Jonas, son of Amittai, of Gathhepher (IV Kings, xiv, 25). This is the kind of thing that neither the Pharisees nor the evangelist are expected to overlook. Commentators generally accept the text and make the best of it; but the difficulty remains.

The papyrus reading is intrinsically excellent. "The Prophet" is a momentous figure in the world of the Fourth Gospel, close to the Messias, or identified with him. When the five thousand saw the miracle of the loaves and fishes, they said: Οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης ὁ ἐρχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον (John vi, 14), so that Jesus, knowing that they would make him king, withdrew to

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Potterie, "Een Nieuwe Papyrus van het Vierde Evangelie, Papyrus Bodmer II," Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor Filosofie en Theologie, XVIII (Nijmegen, 1957), 117–128. I have published a short review, "Papyrus Bodmer II: An Early Codex of St. John," in Theological Studies, XVIII (Baltimore, 1957), 434–441. Dr. Barrett, as cited above, presents with brief remarks a select list of Bodmer readings, including both of those we here consider.

[3] Professor Martin, in a letter of July 13, 1957, replying to certain queries on corrections in P. Bodmer II, has this pertinent remark: "On p. 52, line 2, the article o with προφητης, as finally written, is paler and, on close inspection, seems to have been imperfectly scratched. If so, the corrector, whoever he was, wished to remove it." The impulse to alter readings into conformity with a previously adopted text fortunately failed, in this instance, of success. I am deeply indebted to Professor Martin, who had the kindness to reëxamine the papyrus on my account. See also below, fn. 39.

[4] R. Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes (Göttingen, 1950), p. 236, fn. 1. The same conjecture, credited to Owen, is noted in Nestle-Aland, Novum Testamentum Graece [22] (Stuttgart, 1956), appartus ad loc.

the mountain. In Jerusalem, some were saying, *This is truly the Prophet*; others, *This is the Christ* (John vii, 40–41). Hence the alarm of the Pharisees; hence their reply to Nicodemus: *Search and see that the Prophet riseth not from Galilee.*

Against the Bodmer reading stands the whole mass of the tradition. Is that decisive? A single letter would be easily lost, in a sentence that runs quite well without it; and few readers would ever miss it. Once the omission was current in the best codices, it might never be recovered. It is possible that the scribe of P^{66} has preserved for us here a trait of the primitive text.

John viii, 25

The dialogue of Jesus with the Jews at Jerusalem continues throughout the following chapter, which begins in P^{66} with our twelfth verse, omitting the episode of the adulteress. In the treasury of the temple, in the opening words of his discourse, the unique claims of Jesus are reaffirmed: *I am the Light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life* (John viii, 12). Withstanding every contradiction, he continues, asserting his authority, his union with the Father, and rising at last to the minatory climax: *For if you do not believe that I am* (ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι), *you shall die in your sins* (John viii, 24). Σὺ τίς εἶ, they ask, *Who are you?* According to our hitherto invariable text, Jesus replies: Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν.

The scribe of P^{66}, in his first writing, copied these words as we have them, continuing the sentence as follows: πολλὰ ἔχων περὶ ὑμῶν λαλεῖν καὶ κρίνειν. The only variant here from the text we know is the participle ἔχων for the indicative ἔχω. The latter throws the full stop after ὑμῖν, and joins the new clause with what follows. The reading ἔχων appears to be singular in the Greek codices; but it is supported by Nonnus' paraphrase, to be quoted below, and by two Old Latin manuscripts (one of them the Palatinus) noted by Tischendorf. It is incidental to our present inquiry.

The papyrus, however, just before τὴν ἀρχήν and just following the introductory words εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, has a sign of

omission ./. above the line, and in the margin the words εἶπον ὑμῖν so that the sentence in full becomes: Εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Εἶπον ὑμῖν τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν, πολλὰ ἔχων περὶ ὑμῶν λαλεῖν καὶ κρίνειν.

There is a fair presumption, as we shall see, that the correction is by the first hand; and there is no presumption, based on evidence, that the scribe invented it. C. K. Barrett translates the words of Jesus, *I told you in the beginning that which also I am speaking to you* [*now*].[5] Does the correction in the Bodmer text restore it to its original form? Dr. Barrett expresses an opinion as follows: "It seems doubtful whether this is an improvement on the current text, of which it is probably a secondary development." [6]

The total philological problem involved is very teasing. Perhaps we may begin with a survey of notable translations and interpretations of the common text. The ancient versions are an important indication that to the earliest translators the original afforded no evident meaning. The Brixianus, for example, among the Old Latin codices, offers only this painfully literal replacement of the Greek: *principium quod et loquor vobis*. The Amiatinus has *quia* in place of *quod*; and this is the Vulgate reading adopted by Wordsworth and White. The Palatinus, in the same place, has *qui*, which is read in the Clementine Vulgate.

The text occurs in these three forms in St. Augustine, in contexts which, expressly or by implication, usually complete the ellipse just as the Latin invites one to do.[7] In answer to the question *Who are you*, Jesus answers: [*I am*] *the Beginning, who also speak to you*. Only in the Commentary on St. John, Augustine takes account of the original, and observes that *principium* must be construed, like τὴν ἀρχήν, in the accusative. The full sense must be drawn from the context:

> Quoniam abs te audivimus, *Nisi credideritis quia ego sum*, quid te esse credemus? ad hoc respondit, *principium*, tanquam diceret, *prin-*

[5] Barrett, as above (fn. 2), p. 176.

[6] Ibid.

[7] St. Augustine, De Genesi ad litteram, liber imperfectus, c. iii (Migne, P. L. XXXIV, col. 222): "Ipse Dei filius principium se dixit, quando ei dictum est, *Tu quis es*, et dixit, *Principium quod et loquor vobis*." Ample references to other places in Augustine are given by Marie Comeau, S. Augustin Exégète du Quatrième Évangile [3] (Paris, 1930), p. 53, fn. 1.

cipium me credite. et addidit, *quia et loquor vobis*: id est, quia humilis propter vos factus, ad ista verba descendi.[8]

This is a serious effort to make sense of a difficult place; but it is manifestly strained. Moreover, it is quite exceptional. With little or no acquaintance with the Greek, and misled by the ambiguous Latin form *principium*, Western exegetes for centuries construed it with *sum* understood.

Other ancient versions are no more helpful than the Latin.[9] An interpretation clear in itself and compatible with the original text is first found in a Greek commentary. "After so long a time," says St. John Chrysostom, reproaching the Pharisees, "and signs and teaching, you ask *Who are you*? What then says Christ?"

Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν. Ὃ δὲ λέγει τοιοῦτόν ἐστι· τοῦ ὅλως ἀκούειν τῶν λόγων τῶν παρ' ἐμοῦ ἀνάξιοί ἐστε, μήτι γε καὶ μαθεῖν ὅστις ἐγώ εἰμι.[10]

In the sense of ὅλως, as Chrysostom evidently takes it, τὴν ἀρχήν is good Greek, with ample illustration in the authors classical and koine. More commonly it is so used with a negative, in the sense *omnino non*; but the negative may be implied, as it is here: I ought not even to talk to you at all! The text is elliptical; but in an exclamation, as Chrysostom takes it, this is no more difficult in Greek than in English: *That I even speak to you at all*! Zahn, among modern commentators, adopts this sense.[11]

St. Cyril of Alexandria understands our text much as Chrysostom does; but he elucidates less clearly the niceties of grammar. Ἀλλὰ καὶ δίκαια πάσχω, Christ replies to his inquisitors, ὅτι καὶ λόγου παρ' ὑμῖν ἐποιησάμην ἀρχήν.[12] *That I even began to speak to you*! would be the equivalent here of Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν. Cyril adds another interpretation, which he thinks may underlie the one just given: Ἔδει γάρ με, φησίν, οὐχ ὑμῖν ὅλως

[8] St. Augustine, In Joannis Evangelium, tract. XXXVIII, c. xi (Migne, P. L. XXXV, col. 1681).

[9] See Tischendorf, Novum Testamentum Graece, editio octava maior, ad loc.

[10] St. John Chrysostom, In Joannem, hom. LIII, i (Migne, P. G. LIX, col. 293).

[11] See Blass-Debrunner, Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch,[9] § 300, 2 (Anhang). This is the sense adopted by Bauer, Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament[4] (Berlin, 1952), s. v. ἀρχή, 1.b, in fine.

[12] St. Cyril of Alexandria, In Joannis Evangelium, lib. V, ad locum (Migne, P. G. LXXIII, col. 817).

προσλαλῆσαι κατὰ τὴν ἀρχήν: *For I should not at all have spoken to you at the outset.*[13] That is to say, to receive a welcome, Christ should have gone first of all to the Gentiles.

No exception may be taken to the temporal sense of τὴν ἀρχήν; but Cyril takes broad liberty with λαλῶ, paraphrasing with an aorist in the first interpretation, and equivalently with an aorist in the second. One is obliged to throw the words of the evangelist into a flight above time to justify such freedom; and that should be a last resort.

Nonnus of Panopolis (400 A. D.), an Egyptian of Greek culture, besides his pagan epic, the Dionysiaca, has left us, in the same meter and style, his Paraphrase of St. John. It is an astonishingly artificial performance which occasionally throws light on the text of the Gospel or its exegesis. Our passage, in context, is rendered as follows:

ὑψινόων δὲ
λαὸς Ἰουδαίων φιλοπευθέα ῥήξατο φωνήν·
τίς σὺ πέλεις; καὶ Χριστὸς ἀνίαχεν· ὅττι περ ὑμῖν
ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὀάριζον, ἔχων νήριθμα δικάζειν
καὶ λαλέειν.[14]

We have noticed the agreement of Nonnus and P^{66} in the reading ἔχων. He undoubtedly read the previous words just as we do: Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν. How did he understand them? Maldonatus (1534–1583), who preferred Nonnus' exegesis to the many others he reviews, paraphrased ὅττι περ ὑμῖν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὀάριζον as follows: "ego sum id quod vobis a principio loquor, id est, quod iam inde ab initio, quod semper vobis dico."[15] A closer translation would be: *Just what from the beginning I was telling you.* This is perfectly intelligible as a reply to the question which has just been asked.

Nonnus too has taken liberties, however. Τὴν ἀρχήν does not mean ἐξ ἀρχῆς. St. John uses the latter, or ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, when he wishes to say *from the beginning.* If τὴν ἀρχήν is temporal, it

[13] Ibid.

[14] Nonni Panopolitani Paraphrasis S. Evangelii Ioannei, edited by A. Scheindler (Leipzig: Teubner, 1881), p. 91, lines 59–63 (cf. Migne, P. G. XLIII, col. 817).

[15] Joannis Maldonati Commentarii in Quatuor Evangelistas, edited by J. M. Raich (Mainz, 1874), II, 703.

should mean *to begin with, at the beginning*. Moreover, he alters the tense of the verb from the present λαλῶ to the imperfect ὠάριζον, a license difficult to defend. Maldonatus' version, inspired by Nonnus, has its modern counterparts, as we shall see.

Leaving the ancients, we may turn to Frederick Field's Notes on the Translation of the New Testament.[16] These have immediate reference to the 1881 revision of the King James Version, and were never intended to be a full philological commentary; but they are most valuable. On John viii, 25, he first quotes the King James Bible, *Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning*, and then the revision, *Even that which I have also spoken unto you from the beginning*. In these renderings, he is at pains to observe, λαλῶ is used like λέγω; but this he finds admissible in St. John.[17] It is a pertinent remark, and seems to be illustrated at the end of the verse immediately following: κἀγὼ ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λαλῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον (John viii, 26).

With the Anglican versions, Field compares the interpretation of Chrysostom, which we have already seen; but he decides in favor of the former: "The generally received exposition commends itself by its being just the answer we should have expected," he writes, adding one of his felicitous illustrations from the classics, Plautus, Captivi III, 4, 91: "Quis igitur ille est? *Quem dudum dixi a principio tibi.*"

We may agree with Field that this affords a suitable reply to the question; and it has the sanction of Maldonatus; but one overstates the case in calling this — or any other — "the generally received exposition." Surprisingly, Field fails to touch upon the great license taken in translating τὴν ἀρχήν, like Nonnus, as if it were ἐξ ἀρχῆς. It seems necessary to agree with Bultmann, who recognizes that τὴν ἀρχήν may be temporal (*zuerst*), but never continuative (*von Anfang an*).[18] With ἐξ ἀρχῆς, the present verb could quite well be understood as comprising past and present, as it does in the versions which Field accepts; but not with the

[16] Frederick Field, Notes on the Translation of the New Testament, being the Otium Norvicense Pars III (Cambridge, 1899). See p. 93.

[17] Bultmann, independently, makes the same remark, Das Evangelium des Johannes, p. 267, fn. 7, citing John xii, 50. See also F. Prat, Jésus Christ, sa Vie, sa Doctrine, son Oeuvre[2] (Paris, 1933), II, 58, fn., citing John iii, 11 and 34.

[18] Bultmann, op. cit., p. 267.

proper sense of temporal *τὴν ἀρχήν*. Chrysostom does not fall into this difficulty, because he takes the adverbial accusative as equivalent to ὅλως, and the verb as a simple present.

The modern editor of an ancient book is inevitably an exegete, not least of all in the act of punctuation. In the Greek New Testament, Westcott and Hort have made a significant contribution to the study of our text, simply by printing it as a question: Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν; [19] Edgar J. Goodspeed translates: *Why do I even talk to you at all?* [20]

For the discussion of this solution, it is proper to begin with Westcott's own:

> Among the many interpretations of this most difficult phrase, two appear to have chief claim to consideration. (1) *Altogether, essentially, I am that which I even speak to you. . . .* (2) *How is it that I even speak to you at all?* [21]

The interrogative form, he continues, "seems to fall in best with the general sense of the dialogue"; and he finds for it, "in the main," the support of the Greek Fathers, quoting Chrysostom and Cyril as we have done.

In an additional note on "this most obscure sentence," Westcott observes that it may be exclamatory rather than interrogative.[22] This seems to me clearly to be Chrysostom's sense. It may be doubted whether a Greek of his literary formation would have thought of taking ὅτι as a direct interrogative unless the context categorically required it.

The grammatical question calls for close examination. Westcott cites three examples of ὅτι interrogative in the New Testament: Mark ii, 7; ix, 11; and especially Mark ix, 28.[23] In the first of these, according to Westcott and Hort's critical edition, ὅτι is a marginal reading, with τί in the text. The second is introduced by an interrogative locution (ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες); and the third by a simple interrogative (ἐπηρώτων). Since in all three

[19] The New Testament in the Original Greek, edited by B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort. ὑμῖν with a period is printed in the margin.

[20] The Student's New Testament: the Greek Text and the American Translation by Edgar J. Goodspeed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).

[21] B. F. Westcott, The Gospel according to St. John (London, 1908), II, 10.

[22] Op. cit., p. 29.

[23] Ibid.

cases the question is direct, the force of the particle as a direct interrogative is indicated. Yet one would like to have clinching proof that the usage was current. Significantly, in ix, 11, codices WΘ and others read TIOYN in place of OTI; and in ix, 28, ADKY and others read ΔIATI.[24] Without questioning the genuineness of OTI in either place, one may note that the scribes did not like it.

All the examples are confined to Mark; and they appear to be the only ones in the New Testament. There are none in John. Debrunner comments that ὅτι in Mark ix, 11 and 28, is short for τί ὅτι. In John viii, 25, he would allow the possibility that the ellipse, after the question *Who are you*? might be understood as follows: *You ask wherefore I talk to you at all*? [25] This would be subtle, in classical Greek, and is much too elusive for St. John.

Recognizing the difficulty of the text, while favoring the interrogative sense, Westcott takes account of several affirmative interpretations: (a) *Altogether, essentially, what I even speak to you.* (b) *To begin with, first of all, I am even that which I am saying.* (c) *Even that which I am speaking and have spoken to you, all along, from the first, that I am.*[26]

The first of these has recently appeared in an Italian edition of the Bible, produced under the direction of the Pontifical Biblical Institute.[27] To the question *E chi sei tu*, Jesus replies: *Precisamente ciò che io vi dico.* This is the simplest translation, says the editorial note, and most in keeping with the situation. Westcott found that its English equivalent, among his affirmative forms, was least open to objection and gave the best sense.

It must be remarked that in this instance τὴν ἀρχήν is taken in the sense of ὅλως where no negative is expressed or implied. Nothing could be more affirmative than the answer *Exactly what I am telling you.* With a negative, one understands this force of τὴν ἀρχήν very well: *not to begin with,* that is, *not at all.* If the

[24] See Nouum Testamentum Graece: Euangelium secundum Marcum, edited by S. C. E. Legg (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), ad loc.

[25] Blass-Debrunner, Grammatik, §300, 2 (Anhang).

[26] Westcott, The Gospel according to St. John, II, p. 29.

[27] La Sacra Bibbia, tradotta dai testi originali con note a cura del Pontificio Istituto Biblico di Roma, vol. VIII, I Vangeli (Florence [1950]).

same use, without the negative, is good koine in the New Testament period, unmistakable examples would be helpful.

Westcott's second affirmative form is found in a beautiful new French translation of the Bible, produced under the direction of the Dominican School at Jerusalem.[28] To the question, Jesus replies: *D' abord ce que je vous dis.* Westcott found such a sense vulnerable because λέγω and not λαλῶ would be required. Yet the same objection could be urged against the first of his affirmative renderings. Frederick Field and Bultmann, as we have seen, recognized the relaxation from classical usage in λαλῶ, and accepted it as Johannine. On the score of Greek, except for neglecting adverbial *καί*, the French version seems to me irreproachable. Contextually, it is less convincing. A justifying footnote calls attention to the antithesis between *τὴν ἀρχήν*, *d' abord*, in this verse, and *τότε*, *alors*, in verse 28; but the connection seems tenuous. Bultmann had considered the possibility, to reject it.[29]

Dr. Barrett has expressed an unfavorable opinion of the new reading of the Bodmer papyrus.[30] In his Commentary on St. John, published before the new codex was known, he sets aside the interrogative form of the common text, and adopts the rendering, *I am from the beginning what I tell you.*[31] This was the third affirmative form proposed by Westcott, who observed, however, that the sense here given to *τὴν ἀρχήν* is very questionable.[32] It is sanctioned, no doubt, by the example of Nonnus, Maldonatus, the Anglican versions, and even by Frederick Field. Yet surely, as Bultmann pointed out, *τὴν ἀρχήν* and *ἐξ ἀρχῆς* are not synonymous.

Every attempt to find a meaning for our text that will meet all requirements labors under the inexorable difficulty that, as it stands, it is an ellipse the resolution of which is not self-evident. Hence it is that the best of scholars fail of a definitive solution,

[28] La sainte Bible, traduite en français sous la direction de l'École Biblique de Jérusalem (Paris, 1956).

[29] Op. cit., p. 268. If *τὴν ἀρχήν* has its correlative term in the future, "er wäre in dem *ὅταν . . . τότε* v.28 ausgesprochen. Aber zu dem *ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν* bildet das *γνώσεσθε* keine verständliche Entsprechung; der Text müsste verderbt sein."

[30] See above, p. 112.

[31] C. K. Barrett, The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (New York [1951]). See p. 283.

[32] Westcott, The Gospel according to St. John, II, 29.

and differ widely in their selection of a provisional one. Taking the words by themselves, I should prefer the exclamatory sense, with Chrysostom, as I understand him, and with Zahn: *That I even talk to you at all!* This takes account of every word of the Greek with strict propriety. Yet it seems out of key in the context. It is no answer to the question, *Who are you?* and could only add to the exasperation of the questioners, already so hostile, to whom Jesus still has many things to say. As a dramatic aside, one might understand it; but that seems artificial.

The hypothesis of primitive error in a text so recalcitrant is not rash. Conjectural emendation, therefore, is entitled to consideration on its merits. Torrey's ἔτι for ὅτι is excellent, as a palaeographical possibility.[33] His translation, *I am even yet in the beginning of my word to you,*[34] seems to force the sense, to say nothing of the congestion of adverbial expressions in the Greek: τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔτι καί. An elaborate rewriting, based on an assumed mistranslation of an assumed Aramaic original, proposed by Matthew Black in his Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts,[35] is dropped in his second edition.[36] Other conjectures of other authors are noted by Bultmann, who adopts none of them.[37] Deeming the text corrupt, he offers his own *ad sensum* conception of the passage, but concludes, *non liquet*.[38] I think we must accept the verdict.

The Bodmer Reading

We have seen from the ancient versions that the Greek text, in the common tradition, must have been obscure to very early readers, as it is to us. We also see, from the absence of variants, that the tradition was faithfully transmitted in spite of its obscurity. The error, if there is one, lies very far back; and it left no trace in the prevailing copies.

Against this background, let us at last consider the corrected

[33] The Four Gospels: a New Translation, by C. C. Torrey (New York and London [1933]), p. 323.

[34] Op. cit., p. 202.

[35] M. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946). See pp. 172 ff.

[36] The same, second edition, 1954.

[37] Bultmann, Das Evangelium, p. 266, fn. 7.

[38] Op. cit., p. 268 and fn. 2.

reading of P^{66}: Εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Εἶπον ὑμῖν τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν: *Jesus said to them: I told you at first, what also I am telling you.*

If this were the common tradition of the text, it is safe to surmise that the main body of Johannine scholars would be content with it. For the sake of perfect clarity, a few elementary remarks might be made. Of τὴν ἀρχήν and of λαλῶ we have already spoken. The complement of εἶπον is understood from the question asked, as in John ix, 27, Εἶπον ὑμῖν ἤδη καὶ οὐκ ἠκούσατε. So, in a passage much like ours, when the Pharisees insist, *If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly*, Jesus replies: Εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε (John x, 25).

A question arises from the strongly determined force of τὴν ἀρχήν, *at the beginning, at first*. What would it mean in the ears of the Pharisees, or to the earliest readers of the Gospel? *At the beginning of my mission*, no doubt, *when first I began to speak to you*. Such a sense is not difficult to justify within the Johannine account of Jesus' teaching at Jerusalem.

There is nothing exciting about such a reading. It is not brilliant nor highly ingenious. It is simple enough to be Johannine. One advantage it certainly has over the common text: a clear and definite meaning. In that respect, at least, it seems fair to think that it is like the text intended by the author.

Under the circumstances, it is proper to consider how the corrected reading may have arisen. It comes to us by way of a marginal addition, in a papyrus codex of the Gospel, written probably in Egypt, about the end of the second century. Many if not all the corrections in the papyrus are by the first hand. We shall be better satisfied on this point when we have a complete facsimile under our eyes; but in the meantime we may follow the editor's opinion that the marginal readings were, in all probability, by the scribe.[39] Plate II, in the lower margin, gives a sample of

[39] Martin, Papyrus Bodmer II, p. 31: "Nous avons déjà laissé entendre que la réparation des très nombreuses omissions était selon toute probabilité due au scribe original. En tout cas rien n' oblige à les attribuer à une autre main." In a letter mentioned above (fn. 3), Professor Martin added these particulars. The hand of the corrections and additions "is smaller than the main text and the letters a little more angular, also often in a blacker ink, but, to my sentiment at least, can be assigned to the writer of the whole."

an addition of two words to the original writing of the line above it. They are slightly reduced in size, and have a somewhat neater appearance than the ordinary text; but they are typical of the first hand.

This very place, John vii, 37, illustrates a further relevant point. Both the omission and the marginal addition are readings attested by other manuscripts and recorded by modern editors.[40] There is a distinct probability, therefore, that the scribe of P^{66}, in the first writing, followed one of his codices faithfully, and that he afterwards collated another, and added the words in the margin.

He must have followed some such course in another instance, illustrated in Plate III. Here the correction is made over the first writing; and it results in a perfectly legible text, obviously by the first hand, in a place well known to textual students: εταραχθη τω $\overline{\pi\nu\iota}$ ως εμβριμωμενος (John xi, 33). One can see, however, that there has been erasure and expunctuation of parts of the original text, and rewriting of other parts of it, which were probably washed out. Enough remains to leave no room for doubt that the words originally ran: ενεβριμησατο τω $\overline{\pi\nu\iota}$ και εταραξεν εαυτον. The revised form, which is supported by the Beatty codex (P^{45}), is a clearly intentional variant from the original writing, which is the reading of many important codices and of our printed editions.[41] It is improbable that a professional scribe would create such a variant, and give himself the trouble of erasing the text authorized by his source to write it in. He must have had more than one form of text before him, and after collation made the revision. His choice would not be ours; but that is another matter. The point is that he bears witness to more than one form of a very early tradition.

In this place, both readings are intrinsically possible, and in that sense sound. Our case in John viii, 25, is quite different. The traditional text, transmitted with remarkable unanimity, is prob-

[40] ερχεσθω tantum S*D be testes: + προς με S^{c}BLT etc.

[41] See F. G. Kenyon, The Chester Beatty Papyri, Fasciculus II, The Gospels and Acts: Text (London, 1933). DΘ fam. 1 are cited in support of the papyrus. Even the *textus receptus* has ενεβριμησατο κ.τ.λ with SABCLW fam. 13. So all the editors.

ably affected by primitive error. At last, in P^{66}, we have proof of a very early variant which satisfies the requirements of intelligibility and fitness, without a trace of suspicious tendency, stylistic or doctrinal. May it be primitive?

If our common text is original, then the addition in P^{66}, or more probably in its source, was a deliberate revision, to relieve an obscurity. The reviser thought he knew what the author intended to say. If the variant in the papyrus is original, then the words ΕΙΠΟΝΥΜΙΝ were omitted by a scribe who confused them, in a moment of vagueness, with what he had already written, ΕΙΠΕΝΑΥΤΟΙCΟΙC. The error must have occurred in a codex so early and so influential that the main tradition derived from it.

The main tradition would easily have passed by less impressive codices in favor of those which had greater prestige. The Bodmer, for example, was a modest book, which seems never to have contained more than a single Gospel. Particles of primitive text would not improbably have vanished, like rivulets in the sand, in the lost copies of the second century.

Conclusion

Our new reading may be an interpolation; it may be primitive. Without it, the obscurity of our common text remains. With it, we have a simple and an adequate solution. In context, we may translate as follows:

> They said to him, Who are you? Jesus said to them: I told you in the beginning that which also I am telling you, having many things to say about you, and to judge; but he who sent me is true; and what I have heard from him, these things I tell the world.[42]

[42] John viii, 25–26. These two verses contain six verbs of saying, from λέγω, εἶπον or λαλῶ. It seems probable that the writer varies his vocabulary mainly to avoid tedious repetition. In the translation, I have not attempted a rigorously consistent distinction of meaning.

STUDIES IN THE APOLOGISTS

ROBERT M. GRANT
University of Chicago

I. TATIAN'S THEOLOGICAL METHOD

The theology of Tatian is difficult to classify. Should one regard its author as a philosopher, as Professor Wolfson does? [1] or as a student of "the homilies of Philo"? [2] or as a writer who made use, even indirectly, of the Parmenides of Plato? [3] In order to answer this question we must inquire first what he knows of Greek philosophy and second what else he knows in regard to Graeco-Roman literary culture.

We can learn little of his acquaintance with philosophy from the stories about philosophers which he relates (Or. 2–3). Nearly every detail in them can be paralleled in the nearly contemporary Lives of the Philosophers by Diogenes Laertius, and Tatian himself mentions a book of this sort by a certain Laitos (Or. 37). In addition, he knows commonplaces about Stoic philosophy; Stoics teach doctrines of cosmic conflagrations and hold that God permeates matter (Or. 3–4; cf. 25).[4] He believes that Aristotle taught that providence did not affect matters lower than the moon,[5] and that *eudaimonia* was based on beauty, wealth, bodily strength, and good birth (Or. 2); he also discredited the immortality of the soul (Or. 25). He has had personal encounters with Cynics (Or. 19 and 25). Aside from this, he has only scraps of information about Plato, Epicurus, Democritus, and Pythagoras (Or. 25). In short, his remarks about philosophy and philosophers give the impression that he was neither as much interested nor as well versed in this kind of learning as was his Christian teacher Justin.

[1] The Philosophy of the Church Fathers, I (Cambridge, 1956), 11–12.
[2] Ibid., 12.
[3] Ibid., 296–97.
[4] Cf. H. von Arnim, Stoicorum veterum fragmenta, I, 109 and 159.
[5] Cf. A.-J. Festugière, L'idéal religieux des grecs et l'évangile (ed. 2, Paris, 1932), 224–31; the doctrine is not Aristotle's, though often ascribed to him in the Graeco-Roman period. Tatian himself ascribes it to later Peripatetics.

On the other hand, he himself tells us that he was a student of rhetoric, arts, and ideas (Or. 35), though it would appear that his attention had been devoted chiefly to rhetoric and art. He devotes some of his sharpest attacks to grammarians (Or. 26), while spending a good deal of time on grammatical matters. In various parts of his Oration he uses lists which were employed in grammatical teaching: [6] of "inventions" (c. 1), of gods and goddesses (c. 8), of stars (cc. 9–10), of poets and mythographers (c. 24),[7] of writers on the date of Homer (c. 31), of poetesses (c. 33), of sculptors (cc. 33–34), of Argive and Attic kings (c. 39), of pre-Homeric writers, of wise men or legislators, and of the seven wise men (c. 41). He also makes use of such treatises as the one On Homer by Metrodorus of Lampsacus (c. 21),[8] those on the gods by Diagoras, Leon of Pella, and Apion (c. 27), and on oriental peoples by various authors (cc. 36–38). These books are of the kind used in grammatical education.[9]

We are not surprised, therefore, to find him launching an attack on grammarians (c. 26) by criticizing their use of "borrowed plumes," their "falling into a pit while gaping at the sky," their labyrinthine books, and their gift of the Danaids' jar to their readers. All these are borrowed plumes themselves; because of his training in grammar and rhetoric Tatian knows how to use them, and ironically does so.

He then asks why they divide time (or the tenses of a verb) into three parts: past, present, and future. This subject was naturally discussed by grammarians, and doubts were raised as to the accuracy of the division. In the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax we read that while there are three tenses, according to

[6] Cf. H. Diels, "Laterculi Alexandrini," Abhandlungen . . . Berlin, 1904 (Philos.-hist. Classe, 2); Hippolytus, Chron. 235–37 (pp. 90–93 Helm); H.-I. Marrou, Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité (Paris, 1950), 232–34.

[7] Tatian's mention of Hegesias (a mythographer according to A. Gellius, Att. noct. 9, 4, 3) illustrates the problems of editors and critics. The Modena and Venice manuscripts, followed by Schwartz, correctly read "Hegesias," or rather "Hegesiou." The Paris manuscript and its copies read "Hegesilaou," Otto emended this to "Akousilaou." Geffcken emended "Hegesiou" to "Hegesianakos" and on this ground proceeded to criticize Tatian's stupidity.

[8] On him cf. W. Nestle in Pauly-Wissowa, RE XV, 1476–77. Tatian's remarks, compared with other fragments, suggest that he either had read the book or was acquainted with its contents from another source.

[9] Compare the discussion of Augustine's erudition by H.-I. Marrou, Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique (Paris, 1938; repr. 1949), 128–35.

the true (philosophical) account there are only two, past and future; for that which is done either has been done or will be done; it is never (actually) present.[10] Tatian's view is the reverse of this. Only the present exists, as long as the Creator wills it to exist.[11] But the question arises out of his grammatical studies.

Similarly Tatian was concerned with grammar in his later (?) exegesis of Genesis 1, 3.[12] "Let there be [light]" is actually a third person imperative, but from his grammatical studies Tatian was aware that in prayers, such as the first line of the Iliad, the imperative has an optative force. The Demiurge was in darkness, since he asked for light. To whom did he make his petition? To the "God above." [13] Here again it is grammar, rather than philosophy, which serves theology.

In the manner of Sextus Empiricus, writing against the grammarians, Tatian discusses the differences among dialects, Doric, Attic, Aeolic, and Ionic (cc. 1; 26; 30),[14] and points out the immorality of poetry (cc. 1; 24).[15] Rhetoric leads simply to injustice (Or. 1).[16] And letters, and even lines, mean nothing by nature. Their only meaning is conventional (c. 17).[17]

When he defines man (c. 15) Tatian refers to the Stoics as "crow-voiced" because in their view crows were among the birds which like man can produce distinct sounds and therefore possess at least "expressed reason." [18] Tatian is evidently aware of their distinction between the thought as *logos endiathetos* and the word as *logos prophorikos*, though he only hints at it. The distinction is expressed by the rhetorician Hermogenes (p. 352, 16

[10] R. Schneider, Apollonii Dyscoli fragmenta (Leipzig, 1910), 78; cf. Sextus Empiricus, Pyrrh. 3, 142–46.

[11] Cf. Texte und Untersuchungen 63 (Berlin, 1957), 297–98; also E. Peterson in Vigiliae Christianae 3 (1949), 158.

[12] Fragments in the edition of Schwartz, pp. 49–50.

[13] Cf. Origen, De orat. 24, 5; Clement, Ecl. proph. 38, 1. For the Iliad, Apollonius Dyscolus, De syntaxe 3, 66, p. 332, 7 Uhlig. The question goes back to Protagoras; cf. Gudeman in Pauly-Wissowa, RE VII, 1782. For biblical usage cf. the examples collected by Origen, loc. cit.

[14] Sextus Empiricus, Adv. math. 1, 87–89.

[15] Ibid., 1, 286–91.

[16] Ibid., 2, 40–42.

[17] Ibid., 1, 142–48.

[18] Von Arnim, Stoicorum veterum fragmenta, II, 223; Sextus Empiricus, Adv. math. 8, 275.

Rabe) and need not have come to Tatian from the study of philosophy.

With these considerations in mind, we can now turn to the problem presented by Tatian's doctrine of the Logos. It is closely related to that of his master Justin, who describes both human and divine generation of *logos* as "not by 'cutting off'" (Dial. 61 and 128), and says that the generation of the divine Logos was "not as if the Father's substance (*ousia*) were divided up (*apomerizomenēs*), as is the case with all other things which when divided (*merizomena*) and cut are not the same as they were before they were cut" (Dial. 128). In both instances Justin uses the analogy of the lighting of one fire from another. Such an analogy was, of course, appropriate for dealing with "Let there be light."

Tatian, however, introduces a further distinction into the mode of the generation of the Logos. "By the will of his singleness, Logos leapt forth; and the Logos, not coming forth in vain, becomes the first-born work of the Father. We know him as the Beginning of the cosmos. He came into being by *merismos*, not by *apokopē*; for what is cut off has been separated from what existed before, but what has been *meristhen* has received in addition the *diairesis* (Schwartz's conjecture) of the arrangement, and does not impoverish its source." [19] This passage is extraordinarily difficult to understand, but several points may perhaps be clarified. In the first place, Tatian is making a distinction between *apokopē* and *merismos*. (Justin, like Sextus Empiricus, had treated them as essentially the same.) [20] He must have parts of speech in mind, for to Justin's fire-analogy he immediately proceeds to add the analogy (also from Justin, Dial. 61) of the spoken word which does not deprive the speaker of reason (*logos*). If we then examine grammatical usage of his terms we may find what he has in mind. *Apokopē* is the excision of letters or syllables at the end of a word, and as Apollonius Dyscolus says, "every excision implies that some part is lacking from the whole." [21] The Logos could not have come forth by excision, for God remained rational.

[19] Or. 5, p. 5, 21–27 Schwartz.
[20] Sextus Empiricus, Adv. math. 1, 159–68.
[21] De syntaxe 1, 7, p. 7 Uhlig.

Merismos, on the other hand, is simply the classification of parts of speech or the distribution of the functions of inflexions, or the analysis of a sentence into its component parts or the division of a line into words.[22] The last two meanings seem most relevant. If *merismos* divides a sentence into its parts, the sentence remains; if it divides a line into words, the line remains. So it was when God spoke his Logos. He said, "Let there be light." His line, so to speak, remained the same, although divided into the words *genēthētō phōs*.

(It should be noted that Clement of Alexandria, viewing the subject from the standpoint of Christian Platonism, rejected such an analysis as Tatian's. God cannot be *en merei*, either *kata horismon tina* or *kata apotomēn*, Str. 2, 6, 2; the Son of God is *ou merizomenos*, *ouk apotemnomenos*, Str. 7, 5, 5. Thus he returned to Justin's view.)

The Logos thus added (rather than subtracted) *diairesis* of the arrangement (probably the arrangement within God). For grammarians the term *diairesis* meant the "resolution" of a diphthong into two vowels, or of one (compound) word into two.[23] It is used by Tatian to describe practically the same process as *merismos*. In other words, within God there was a distinction without a differentiation. On the other, *oikonomia* may refer to the activity of the Logos in creation. In this case Tatian is indicating that the expression of the Logos was a work of *merismos* in God and of *diairesis* in the world. The latter notion seems to be confirmed by what he goes on to say.

"As the Logos, when begotten in the beginning, in turn begot the creation in which we live, and he himself fashioned (*dēmiourgēsas*) matter for himself, so also I, regenerated in imitation of the Logos, . . . bring the confusion of the matter cognate to me back into proper rhythm."[24] The work of *diairesis* overcame confusion, perhaps the mixture of the elements in the primeval chaos. Professor Nock observes that the emphasis in *metarrhythmizei* is on *meta*, but we should also note that Tatian twice

[22] Definitions in Liddell-Scott-Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon, s. v.; also G. Uhlig, Apollonii Dyscoli De constructione libri quattuor (Leipzig, 1910), 529 (index, s. v. *merismos*).

[23] Liddell-Scott-Jones, op. cit., s. v.

[24] Or. 5, p. 6, 7–12 Schwartz.

compares his own speech with the utterance of the Logos, and both times speaks of its work of arranging what lacked arrangement, of ordering what lacked order.

The conclusion we should draw from these observations is that Tatian's description of the utterance of the Logos is based on grammatical rather than philosophical analogies, and that therefore we cannot accept Otto's translation of *merismos* as *participatio*, or Wolfson's explanation that it reflects the *methexis* of Plato, "after the manner of the participation of things in the Platonic ideas." [25]

II. The Cohortatio of Pseudo-Justin

The reaction of Johannes Geffcken to the author of the Cohortatio was even less favorable than toward the other apologists: "Ich misstraue dem Mann," he wrote.[26] Later critics have been less hostile, but the structure of the Cohortatio has been rather neglected in recent times. It is our purpose to find out what we can about the author by examining this structure.

It should first be mentioned that the work is not pseudonymous but anonymous. There is no evidence for its ascription to Justin before the sixth century, when Stephanus Gobarus quoted a portion of Coh. 23 and said it was written by the early apologist.[27] Fifth-century use of it, in the treatise Against Julian by Cyril of Alexandria [28] and in the preface to the Sibylline Oracles,[29] is made without mention of the author's name.

All we know about the author, therefore, comes from his work.

[25] The expression seems to be derived from memories of Democritus' doctrine that "teaching brings men into proper rhythm" (Clement, Str. 4, 129, 4). Tatian knows something about Democritus; cf. Or. 17, p. 18, 12 Schwartz; but he thinks he wrote On sympathies and antipathies. Cf. J. H. Waszink, Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, II, s. v. Bolos.

[26] Zwei griechischen Apologeten (Leipzig, 1907), 270; cf. also A. Puech, Les apologistes grecs (Paris, 1912), 232–50; A. Cassamassa, Gli apologisti greci (Rome, 1944), 95–99; M. Pellegrino, Gli apologeti greci del ii secolo (Rome, 1947), 203–39; L. Alfonsi in Vigiliae Christianae 2 (1948), 65–88 (on traces of the early Aristotle).

[27] In Photius, Bbl. 232; Migne, PG 103, 1099D.

[28] Passages noted by J. C. T. Otto, Corpus apologetarum christianorum saeculi secundi III (Jena, 1879), 316.

[29] J. Geffcken, Oracula Sibyllina (Leipzig, 1902), 4 (on lines 85–91); cf. K. Mras in Wiener Studien 28 (1906), 72–73; for a date between 474 and 501 (or 507/8), ibid., 80.

He has had a literary education, since he begins his treatise by imitating the exordium of Demosthenes' oration On the Crown;[30] he knows something about poetic metre (Orpheus, c. 15; Homer, c. 17; the Sibyl, c. 37), about the meaning of nouns (c. 21) and pronouns (c. 24), and about poets, historians, and philosophers.

Was he also a traveler? According to his own report he had visited the Pharos, seven stadia from Alexandria, where he saw the remains of the cells supposedly occupied by the seventy supposed translators of the Septuagint, and heard the traditional story from people there (c. 13). Similarly he had visited Cumae, six mile-stones from Baiae, where he saw the grotto of the Sibyl, and heard the traditional story that she had been accustomed to bathe in three (?) receptacles cut from the rock, and then to dress and give oracles from a throne in the grotto (c. 37). There is no way of proving the truth of these stories. There was a regular shipping route between Alexandria and Puteoli, only a few miles from Cumae, but its existence hardly proves that the author made use of it. He did not have to visit either place in order to know about some of the distances between towns and other spots. He adds that his guides showed him places where the oracles were delivered, as well as a sort of bed made of bronze in which (they said) her remains were preserved. And they told him the traditional story that the style of the oracles was poor because of those who wrote them down. The Sibyl could not remember what she had said, and her scribes were incompetent.

The point of both sections is much the same: the divine inspiration of the Septuagint and of the Sibyl is (more or less) confirmed by archaeology. Whatever may be thought of the value of this confirmation, it is evidently important to the author, who proceeds after mentioning the Septuagint to argue that even Old Testaments preserved in the synagogues betray their Christian content. Such books are often to be used, so that no occasion for misrepresentation will arise and so that their Christian nature will "clearly and plainly" (one of the author's favorite expressions) be seen. Similarly after mentioning the Sibyl he says that she "clearly and plainly" predicted the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.

[30] On such imitations cf. G. Quispel in Ned. theol. Tijdschrift 5 (1950–51), 43–46.

Another passage in which the author speaks of his own investigations is in c. 5, where he says that he would like to inquire about the teachings of Plato and Aristotle. They disagree. "For Plato, as if he had descended from above and had accurately observed everything in the heavens, says that the highest God exists in the fiery substance; and Aristotle, setting forth some brief definition of his own philosophy in the treatise To Alexander the Macedonian, clearly and plainly demolishes the opinion of Plato, saying that God does not exist in the fiery substance; but, inventing some fifth etherial and immutable body, says he is in it." Then follows a quotation from Pseudo-Aristotle, De mundo 2, 392a6. The quotation is garbled and the notion that Plato is the person criticized is entirely erroneous.[31] But the author returns to this "Platonic" doctrine twice, once in c. 31, to claim that Plato misunderstood III Regn. 19, 11–12 (where it says that "the Lord was not in the fire"; quite a misunderstanding!) and again in c. 36, to recall Plato's ignorance.

So far we have seen the author using the phrase "clearly and plainly" (*saphōs kai phanerōs*) in passages clearly and plainly of his own composition. Naturally he could add the phrase to his various sources, but usually this does not seem to be the case, as we shall see. Perhaps it would be better to speak of passages where he has done more or less rewriting. He lives in an apologetic tradition of commonplaces and doxographical information. Yet we can probably determine, more or less, what is (more or less) his own.

Certainly chapters 2–8 add nothing to earlier Christian attacks on Homeric polytheism and discordant philosophers,[32] except for the author's errors. It should be noted that the phrase "clearly and plainly" does not occur in them. In c. 9 he gives proof, taken from Julius Africanus (a third-century Christian chronographer), of the antiquity of Moses,[33] and adds to it references to Philo and Josephus, as well as some quotations from Diodorus Siculus. In c. 10 he points out that Greek writers learned about Moses from Egyptian priests; in c. 11, that an oracle praises the Hebrews.

[31] As Geffcken observed, op. cit., 269–70.

[32] Cf. H. Diels, Doxographi Graeci (Berlin, 1879), 17 and 261.

[33] Africanus in Eusebius, Praep. ev. 10, 10, 15–18; cf. A. Harnack, Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur II (Leipzig, 1904), 151–58; 545–48.

The oracle, as Geffcken and Nock [34] long ago pointed out, is undoubtedly a fake; it is otherwise found only in Porphyry's work On the philosophy from oracles, as cited by Eusebius (Praep. ev. 9, 10, 4; Dem. ev. 3, 3, 6). Chapters 12 and 13 contrast (Greek literary works with the inspired Septuagint.

In chapter 14 the author picks up the subject he has mentioned in c. 10, in order to amplify it. Greek writers visited Egypt and there "learned from the history of Moses." These writers include Orpheus, Homer, Solon (mentioned because referred to in the Timaeus, already cited in c. 12), Pythagoras, and Plato. "Since they were in Egypt and were benefited by the history of Moses, they later made declarations opposite to their former erroneous opinions about the gods." The author does not notice that his theory is going to lead him into contradictions. How could Plato, for example, have read "the histories of the prophets" (c. 30; this means Ezekiel, c. 31) if there was no Greek translation? Did Egyptian priests translate for him? What then of the inspiration of the Septuagint?

The author proceeds to provide examples in support of his theory. These are Hellenistic Jewish forgeries ascribed to the various poets. Orpheus, the founder of Greek polytheism, visited Egypt and then wrote about the one God and alluded to the Logos (c. 15). Among the lines cited are two which are the product of late Roman syncretism and elsewhere are found only in Macrobius (Sat. 1, 18).[35] The next section (c. 16) has nothing to do with Egypt; it consists of quotations from the (Hellenistic Jewish) Sibyl, who was very ancient and was mentioned as oracular by Plato and Aristophanes (!). Homer was really a monotheist (c. 17; no mention of Egypt); he invoked a goddess at the beginning of the Iliad because he was imitating the early Orpheus, but his true view is indicated in Iliad 9, 445f. and 2, 204.[36] Then come nine monotheistic lines from "Sophocles," added from Hel-

[34] J. Geffcken, Der Ausgang des griechisch-römischen Heidentums (Heidelberg, 1920), 59; A. D. Nock in Revue des études anciennes 30 (1928), 283.

[35] Cf. E. Peterson, ΕΙΣ ΘΕΟΣ (Göttingen, 1926), 241–45; M. P. Nilsson, Geschichte der griechischen Religion II (Munich, 1950), 457–58; on Orphic forgeries, K. Ziegler in Pauly-Wissowa, RE XVIII 1, 1398–99.

[36] Cf. E. Peterson, Theologische Traktate (Munich, 1950), 49–62, on the use of Iliad 2, 204.

lenistic Jewish "testimonies of dramatists" (c. 18). They too have nothing to do with the author's theory and show only that he has been following some anthology without any discrimination. Finally, since everyone knows that Pythagoras spoke symbolically, as "those who have written his life (Porphyry?) make plain," we might as well provide a passage "worthy of his visit to Egypt" (c. 19). Clement of Alexandria (Protr. 72, 4) had ascribed to "those about Pythagoras" — an expression which, as Professor Nock observes, "could perfectly well mean Pythagoras himself." So it is taken in the Cohortatio.

Finally we come to Plato, who as in the first part of the book (cc. 5–7) is the main object of discussion. Some most ingenious exegesis shows that his doctrines of God, of prophetic inspiration, of judgment, and of resurrection were derived from the Old Testament (in Greek). Like Plato, Homer often reflects the Old Testament, and finally we learn that the image-worship of the Greeks is due to a misunderstanding of Genesis 1, 26: "Let us make man after image and likeness" (cc. 20–34). The order of these chapters is chaotic. Sometimes Plato understood the Old Testament perfectly, and when reiterating its teaching used allegorical language so that he would not suffer the fate of Socrates. At other points he failed to recognize that Moses cannot be understood without *mystikē theōria*; thus he developed the doctrine of ideas from Exodus 25, 9 and 26, 30 (c. 29). His doctrine of God is correct, and he "clearly and plainly" derived it from "the ancient account" (Leg. 4, 715e), which is the law of Moses. He taught "clearly and plainly" about the judgment, but ascribed it to a dead man "for fear of the Greeks" (c. 27).

What the author has done is to combine two theories originally distinct. There was a certain ambiguity about Epicurus' teaching about the gods, or so it appeared to his Stoic opponents. They argued that he kept his genuine atheism quiet for fear of the Athenian state.[37] We find this notion taken over and applied to Plato in the teaching of the second-century Platonist Numenius, because Numenius feels that he understands what Plato really

[37] Posidonius in Cicero, De natura deorum 1, 85. 123; H. Usener, Epicurea (Leipzig, 1887), 103; A. J. Festugière, Épicure et ses dieux (Paris, 1946), 91.

meant.[38] The second theory is that writings can be understood only by *mystikē theōria*. This phrase is not found in Philo, though he has "*theōria* in allegory" (Abr. 131) and "the *theōria* which is [given] through symbols" (Spec. leg. 2, 29). It occurs first in Origen.[39]

Chapter 35 contains an appeal for conversion, supported in c. 36 by references to the self-admitted ignorance of Socrates (wisest of all men, according to an oracle) and to the fatal grief of Aristotle, unable to discover the cause of the tidal current in the Euripos off Chalcis.[40] On the positive side the author appeals to the Sibyl, recognized as a prophetess by Plato (cf. c. 16). The metre of her utterances leaves something to be desired, but it is due not to her but to those who wrote down what she said (c. 37).[41] Moreover, an oracle's hymn to the omnipotent God refers to Him "who formed the first of mortals and called him Adam." This line, presumably fictitious, even though the author says the hymn has been "preserved by many," closely resembles two lines in the Sibylline Oracles (3, 24–25; Geffcken notes the parallel in his edition). Therefore believe the Sibyl, says our author, and pay no attention to philosophers. Two more oracular utterances conclude his work. Ammon calls God *pankryphos*,[42] and Hermes "clearly and plainly" says, "To know God is difficult, and to express Him impossible, even for him who is able to know Him." [43]

We cannot argue that the author of the Cohortatio made use of, or even was acquainted with, the writings of Porphyry. But there is a striking resemblance between his interests and those reflected in the titles of many of Porphyry's works. Porphyry derived philosophy from oracles and from Homer; he wrote a life of Pythagoras; he wrote on divine names and on the unity of the

[38] Frag. 30 Leemans; Eusebius, Praep. ev. 13, 4, 3.

[39] Ioh. comm. 13, 25, p. 248, 27 Preuschen; cf. Contra Celsum 2, 6, p. 132, 24 Koetschau; 6, 23, p. 93, 21.

[40] A late legend; cf. Procopius, Bell. 8, 6, 20; also Phillippson in RE VI, 1282.

[41] A topic discussed by Strabo (Geog. 9, 3, 5, c. 419) and by Plutarch, De Pyth. orac.; cf. H. Chadwick, Origen Contra Celsum (Cambridge, 1953), 440.

[42] Cf. W. Scott — A S. Ferguson, Hermetica IV (Oxford, 1936), 6–7; there is no good reason to emend to "Agathos daimon."

[43] For this Hermetic fragment cf. A. D. Nock — A. J. Festugière, Hermès Trismégiste III (Paris, 1954), 2 and xiii–xiv.

doctrine of Plato and Aristotle. He finally wrote fifteen books Against the Christians, but of them there does not seem to be the slightest trace in the Cohortatio.

We should not claim, in any case, that the author of the Cohortatio can be placed in any direct relationship to Porphyry. All we should claim, with Harnack and others, is that he lived around the middle of the third century, and that we cannot assume that there is any connection between him and the apologist Justin.

THE SICKNESS UNTO DEATH IN THE UNDERWORLD: A Study of Nihilism

> The relation to himself a man cannot get rid of any more than he can get rid of himself, which moreover is one and the same thing, since the self is the relationship to oneself.
>
> — Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death [1]

GEOFFREY CLIVE
Clark University
Worcester, Massachusetts

Since the Enlightenment ennui and despair have been among the most dominant themes in western literature. In the twentieth century there scarcely exists a single major work of fiction which views man's nature and destiny under the aspect of hope or fulfillment. Why this should be so is the subject of interminable discussion which, generally speaking, locates the deeper cause in the breakdown of virtually all genuine religiousness with an attendant rise of meaninglessness and emptiness. This development in turn is linked to the various revolutions, particularly the Industrial, that have combined to undermine traditional occidental modes of thought and living. While some critics hold that it is merely a question of modern society becoming gradually accustomed to the blessings so precipitously conferred upon it by technology, thus comparing its present growing pains to those of an adolescent, few seem to disagree on the prevailing exhaustion and anxiety. In addition to the note of doom struck by the best intellectuals of our day — and its fashionableness is no argument against its truth — it would appear that the unreflecting masses independently of being exposed to this literature do not know how to redeem their leisure time, have lost a great deal of capacity for spontaneous participation, and seek despairingly if not eagerly for something vital to which they can relate themselves and through which they will find renewed structure in their lives. Granted that the characters in the novels of Dostoevsky, Melville,

[1] Soren Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death in Fear and Trembling and The Sickness Unto Death, translated with introduction and notes by Walter Lowrie (New York, 1955), p. 150.

D. H. Lawrence, Faulkner, Mann, and Camus are not representative of "real" society, at the same time they help illuminate it better than statisticians and reporters dream of doing. Both Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky, whose analyses of modern despair remain prototypal, acknowledged a close connection between the imagination of the poet creating a unique instance of a phenomenon commonly observed and the condition of actual men, without, however, blurring the distinction implicit here: "It need hardly be said," writes Dostoevsky in the Preface of Letters from the Underworld,[2]

> that both the writer of these 'Letters' and the 'Letters' themselves are creatures of the imagination. Nevertheless, in view of the circumstances under which, in general, our community has become formed, such men as the writer in question not only may, but are bound, to exist.

And Kierkegaard voices a similar sentiment on this issue:

> Ah, demoniac madness! He rages most of all at the thought that eternity might get it into its head to take his misery from him! This sort of despair is seldom seen in the world, such figures generally are met with only in the works of poets, that is to say, of real poets, who always lend their characters this 'demoniac' ideality (taking this word in the purely Greek sense). Nevertheless such a despairer is to be met with also in real life.[3]

Letters from the Underworld and The Sickness Unto Death were written fifteen years apart (1864 and 1849 respectively) by authors who knew nothing of each other's existence and who moreover came from radically different backgrounds. What Kierkegaard, the disillusioned Lutheran in Christendom, and Dostoevsky, the persecuted Russian nationalist in Tzardom, had in common was a remarkable sensitivity to the signs of their times as well as an uncanny insight into the hearts and minds of men. Not only were they both psychological geniuses, but each in his way set out to reaffirm the passion of a Christian faith as a

[2] Fyodor Dostoevsky, Letters from the Underworld, translated with an introduction by C. J. Hogarth (London, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1913. Last reprinted 1953).

[3] Sickness Unto Death, p. 206.

corrective to competing ideologies of the nineteenth century. On first acquaintance they are predominantly negative thinkers, always inclined to attack and tear down even that — such as Romanticism — to which they are personally drawn. Yet the full force of their destructive criticism would be missed if dissociated from its dialectical counterpart: a sustained conviction that man's greatest problem everywhere and any time is to be properly related to himself and that this relationship can only be sound if ultimately anchored in the presence of God. To be sure, Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard never espoused the same kind of Christianity. Nor, by any means, were they untouched by the doubts and anxieties that bothered their notable contemporaries in quest of wholeness. (John Stuart Mill's Autobiography is not really such an exceptional document as positivist critics are sometimes given to believe.) Indeed by a strict dogmatic measure it is arguable that they were not Christian thinkers at all. The point is that together they viewed the human situation as a predicament rooted in its alienation from a higher Power. Their shared political conservatism, their contempt for middle-class acquiescence in philistinism, their suspiciousness of secular utopianism, their preoccupation with love and suffering as soteriological values are, though worthy of note, secondary in import to their conviction of man's fall from a state of grace which he cannot regain by himself alone. On their view the dimensions of the heavenly and the hellish are inseparable from the other dimensions in which humanity strives for affirmation.

The narrator of Letters from the Underworld has become a familiar character in modern literature. Sick, disgusted, intelligent, understanding and yet not understanding; seeking redemption in the lowest depths of being, he embodies the spirit of Mephistopheles reduced to unheroic proportions or of the Vicomte de Valmont, the hero-villain in Laclos' Les liaisons dangereuses, reincarnated in nineteenth-century St. Petersburg. His story is simple. Burdened from heredity with anti-social instincts, orphaned at an early age, and raised in a tyrannical school environment he has come to hate everyone and everything, not least of all himself. He sees himself as a bundle of resentments ready to take offense at the slightest provocation and even where such grounds

are entirely lacking. When he does not feel insulted he broods, and when not brooding plunges into an orgy of activity in order to escape boredom. What he thinks he wants most of all is peace and quiet, but no sooner are these states of mind realizable possibilities than he goes out of his way to see to it that they do not become actualities. While sharing with the heroes of Romantic literature a calculating prudence superimposed on a wounded heart, he is too perceptive to get wrapt up in their daydreams unless it be to indulge in respites of being like Napoleon. Unlike Julien Sorel, for example, he is not interested in making his way in the world at all costs, for he has already despaired of what the world calls success and consequently gone underground. In this respect he has prophetic affinities with Kafka's tortured souls. Yet for all his hatred of visible reality and existence his dissatisfaction with these is far from final. Periodically he finds it desirable to emerge from his soured state and resume traffic with society. Interestingly enough, the underworldly monasticism of his kind in modern fiction is rarely consistent. Each Walden Pond must have its Concord close by if only to set it in sharp relief. The Underground Man like so many seekers of solitude perennially craves for an antithesis to snarl at with clenched teeth. What he professes to despise makes his escape from it inversely heroic.

In addition to his reflections on the moral bankruptcy of nineteenth-century men with hypersensitive souls and his longing for "the great and the beautiful," he focuses his narrative on two personal encounters which apparently meant a great deal to him. One was being insulted by an officer whom he paid back handsomely, devoting an inordinate amount of time and energy to sweet revenge. The other was a visit to a brothel following a dinner of high-school alumni where not altogether causelessly he felt himself horribly abused by the company and proceeded to spoil the party so far as that lay within his power, the festivities having reduced themselves to a drunken brawl *à l'ancienne Russe*. It is during this episode that he meets Liza whom, under the influence of Fichte no doubt, he commences to lecture on the sins of the flesh and the dignity of the married state. This meeting with a second "fallen" person is a typically Dostoevskyan situa-

tion save that in this instance it does not lead to mutual redemption. Liza responds to the Underground Man's entreaties to change her profession by accepting his invitation to visit him at home. (Much to his regret, in retrospect, had he given her his address.) Instead of welcoming her as the instrument of his salvation from despair and self-torment or just being civil, he treats her with icy contempt. For a time he does not address a single word to her, realizing of course that for Liza this unnatural silence is tantamount to a living death. She intuits his great unhappiness and for a moment, which he passionately seizes in a fit of physical desire, yields herself to him in order, so she hopes, to bring him around to himself. But to no avail! So deeply ingrained is his self-hatred that he must destroy the very possibility of losing his chains. Even self-sacrificing Liza who knows the experience of prostitution can no longer put up with his treatment of her. He wants her to return right after she has run down the stairs though he is still clear-sighted enough to admit to himself that it would be the same thing all over again. Nowhere in modern literature is the split between the man of impulse and the man of active involvement better delineated.

Above all the Underground Man prizes his freedom. And by it he means little more than being able to do as he pleases. There is a beguiling mixture of truth and error in his attack on the diversified cult of scientific determinism in nineteenth-century thought. It need only be recalled here that the Marxists, the Darwinians, the Benthamites, and Saint-Simonians, and the numerous disciples of goddess "science" all labored under the illusion that their excursions into the philosophy of man were strict *Wissenschaft*. Or, if they did not go quite so far, they held that in principle at any rate science could and should be the norm for human values. The Underground Man, quite correctly in this case, resents the progressive "dehumanization" of individuals into "piano-keys." Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard would agree with him that to obscure individual responsibility and freedom in a maze of bad metaphysics, pretentious statistics and pseudo-scientific speculation (all unrelated to concrete forms of human existence) is pernicious for human welfare. They would go along with his critique of utilitarian utopianism and its naïve faith in

the redeeming power of civilization. Today such criticism is commonplace and possibly overdone, but in 1864 it was highly unorthodox, and it is far from ineffectively voiced even for us:

> Advantage, indeed? What, after all, *is* advantage? Would *you*, gentlemen, undertake exactly to define wherein human advantage consists? What if human advantage not only *may*, but *does*, consist of the fact that, on certain occasions, man may desire, not what is good for him, but what is bad? . . . Can human interests *ever* be properly reckoned up? May there not always remain interests which never have been, never can be, included in any classification? . . . May there not, therefore, exist something which to most men is even dearer than their true interests? Or, not to infringe the logical sequence, may there not exist some supreme interest of interests (the additional interest of which I am speaking) which is greater and more absorbing than any other interest, and for which man, if the need should arise, is ready to contravene every law, and to lose sight alike of common sense, honor, prosperity and ease — in a word, of all the things which are fair and expedient — if haply he can gain for himself that primal, that supreme, advantage which he conceives to be the dearest thing on earth? [4]

The Underground Man would not have been so childish as to apprehend the totalitarianism of Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini as a return to pre-civilized barbarism:

> Civilization develops in man nothing but an added capacity for receiving impressions. That is all. And the growth of that capacity further augments man's tendency to seek pleasure in blood-letting. . . . Possibly you may say that all this happened in a comparatively barbarous age — that even at the present day the times are barbarous — that golden pins are still being thrust into people's breasts — that though man in many things, has learnt to see clearer now than he used to do in *more* barbarous ages, he has not yet learnt to act wholly as reason and science would have him do. Yet all the while, I know, you are persuaded in your own minds that man is bound to improve as soon as ever he has dropped some old, bad customs of his, and allowed science and healthy thought alone to nourish, to act as the normal directors of, human nature. Yes, I know that you are persuaded that eventually man will cease to err *of set purpose*, or to let his will clash with his normal interests. On the contrary (say you),

[4] Dostoevsky, Letters from the Underworld, pp. 25–27.

> science will in time show man (though, in your opinion, it is superfluous to do so) that he does not possess *any* will or initiative of his own, and never has done, but that he is as the keyboard of a piano, or as the handle of a hurdy-gurdy.[5]

In stressing man's love for adversity and destruction as being as much a part of his makeup as his desire for order and prosperity he offers a realistic appraisal of the threats and ambiguities that inhere in every mode of existence. "Reason is an excellent thing — I do not deny that for a moment; but reason is reason, and no more, and satisfies only the reasoning faculty in man, whereas volition is a manifestation of all life (that is to say, human life as a whole, with reason and every other sort of appendage included)." [6]

But Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard would emphatically take issue with the Underground Man's conception of freedom. It is his tragedy, so to speak, that while being felicitous in the construction of definitions — "man is a creature which walks on two legs and is devoid of gratitude" — and in his grasp of abstract questions, he is unsuccessful in dealing with himself. In Kierkegaard's terminology, he cannot transmute ideal possibilities into existential realities, a process which contrary to the Hegelian dialectic does not proceed in and of itself. Even where he duplicates his notion of freedom, in practice it turns out to be self-contradictory and illusory. He becomes a prisoner of his own passions and capricious impulses. "Without a pure heart there can be no full, no true, realization of self," he declaims,[7] but if a man be without a pure heart — as he himself admits being — how can he possibly rely on himself for the sole authority of his conduct? By setting himself up as his own deity he cuts himself off from any outside influence which might give his freedom some limitation and thus some meaning. Revolutionary political parties from the Jacobins to the Communists have made the same mistake. Obsessed with being the Opposition [8] they could only define themselves creatively in terms of resentment. As soon as they

[5] Ibid., pp. 28–29.
[6] Ibid., pp. 33–34.
[7] Ibid., p. 45.
[8] Cf. Kierkegaard, Sickness Unto Death, pp. 245 ff.

came to power and had to act responsibly they fell into daemonic idolatry. The fate of the Underground Man is a singular version, prophetic as so many of Dostoevsky's constructions, of the "kingdom of heaven on earth" that "idealists" left and right have been promising to establish since 1789. In The Possessed Dostoevsky held up to ridicule and scorn every major faction in Russia. Like Kierkegaard he preferred to speak Christianly and honestly, which is to say, non-politically.

The Sickness Unto Death traces a few key directions despair takes in the lives of men. Ordinarily the term is used to describe a state of disenchantment with things in general or with oneself brought on by a nervous breakdown, frustrated hope, irreparable loss or some other calamity in experience. For Kierkegaard this is the despair of immediacy, a comparatively mild case of the sickness, since the individual affected by it need not have any understanding of his condition and will in all likelihood be predisposed to locate its cause outside himself. Despair would not be the sickness unto death if it responded to a change of air, mood, environment or psychoanalyst. Ultimately every form of despair from that endured by neglected maidens at a dance to Satan's in hell is tied to the sickness, although Kierkegaard focuses on those manifestations which presuppose a considerable degree of self-reflection and awareness. Hence most of the aspects under which he examines despair are particularly germane to the feverishly conscious Underground Man. As the sickness unto death despair refers fundamentally to a self which has despaired over itself so that in weakness or defiance it remains divided — the individual cannot bear to be and face himself as himself. To do so, in despair and always short of a real cure, he adopts poses and stratagems which, temporarily, conceal his self from himself and give him the illusion of not being a self or being a "new" self. Eccentrics who periodically become Napoleon or Balzac exemplify obtrusively but not necessarily at great intensity a common human trait of desiring to get rid of oneself and be somebody else or, like the Underground Man, be an "insect" instead of a man.[9]

Just as the Underground Man vacillates constantly between

[9] Cf. Sickness Unto Death, pp. 152 f.

periods of extreme self-degradation and unconfined self-esteem, so Kierkegaard opposed any view of the self which regards it either as entirely autonomous or as totally insignificant. The claim of the eternal upon it makes it at once infinitely precious as well as infinitely dependent. Thus despair can be equally the result of illusions of grandeur consciously or unconsciously entertained as of fits of hatred for oneself and the whole of existence. The individual who has altogether soured on life is as sick as the familiar middle-aged lady who "loves" but everything — Mohammed, Van Gogh's sun flowers, and Nietzsche's Zarathustra poems thrown into her infinite capacity for being transfixed. Christianity's stand on the joint dignity and misery of man before God underlies Kierkegaard's notion of what a self ought to become if it is not to linger in despair. It must have faith, by virtue of the absurd perhaps, that for God all things are possible while it is impossible for the individual self to be God. The center of the self is its divine eternal source. Once that is lost sight of or denied it is doomed to squander itself in the realms of the fantastic-beautiful and the fantastic-ugly. Faith is a dead option for the Underground Man. He cannot even believe in Liza, let alone in the invisible God of theism. It is in terms of the negative theology, of God-forsakenness and rebellion, that he bears witness to the nothingness of man withou' God. Here again the author of the Grand Inquisitor and the author of The Sickness Unto Death and Training in Christianity struck a most prophetic note: For modern western man the only conditions under which religion can be existentially illuminating are those of absurdity where religion is existentially denied. Goethe's Faust, Dostoevsky's Underground Man, Melville's Captain Ahab, Kierkegaard's Seducer, Kafka's K — these, not the insipid moralizers of so-called religious fiction, testify to the glory of God, even in hell.

Much to the horror of some professional philosophers and new critics of literature, the coupling of Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard has already done irremedial harm, especially where the philosophers do not regard Christian thought as analytic, that is to say, thought-provoking, and where the literary critics discover an ominous lack of symbolism in novels of ideas. Under these circumstances the close affinity between the Underground Man's

despair and the aspects under which Kierkegaard examines it in The Sickness Unto Death might well irritate both camps still further. If the argument here reveals an unhealthy relationship between a work of art and a work of thought this is, if not purely coincidental, certainly not its main point, namely, that Letters from the Underworld requires philosophical (in the broadest sense of the word) explication to become fully intelligible not only as a significant document in the history of ideas but also as a literary and psychological milestone in autobiography:

> I wish, in particular, to try whether one can *ever* be really open with oneself — *ever* be really fearless of any item of truth. *En passant,* Heine has said that a true autobiography is practically impossible, since every man lies to himself. In his (Heine's) opinion, even Rousseau, in his *Confessions, lied* — partly out of set purpose, and partly out of vanity. And I believe that Heine is right. I myself know how vanity may lead a man to impute whole crimes to himself; of the working of such vanity I have a good idea. But Heine was speaking of men who write their confessions *for the public eye,* whereas I wish to write but for myself alone. . . . Moreover, I do not wish to be restricted in the scope of my writing. Consequently I intend to observe therein no order or system. What I remember, that I shall write down.[10]

The Underground Man is no professor of anything except suffering. But being fairly well-educated and read he cannot help in pouring out his soul — as no one in western literature had poured it out before him — he cannot help sharing with the reader his reflections on his experience. I am consciously violating the sequence of historical time by taking a work written in 1849 as a commentary on one composed fifteen years subsequently, but The Sickness Unto Death — under the aspect of eternity could it be? — happens to be the best and only worthy companion to Letters from the Underworld. What cries out for interpretation in Dostoevsky's narrative is clarified and resolved by Kierkegaard's brilliant analysis. Not only content-wise but linguistically

[10] Letters from the Underworld, p. 47.

as well this is one of the great marriages of minds inexplicable on superficial grounds, in modern intellectual history.[11]

The Universality of This Sickness (Despair)

> So far as I am concerned, I have but carried to a finish in my life, what you have never even dared to carry half-way, although you have constantly mistaken your cowardice for prudence, you have constantly cheated yourself with comforting reflections. The truth is that I have been more alive than you.[12]

> There lives not one single man after all who is not to some extent in despair, in whose inmost parts there does not dwell a disquietude, a perturbation, a discord, an anxious dread of an unknown something, or of something he does not even dare to make acquaintance with, dread of a possibility of life, or dread of himself, so that, after all, as physicians speak of a man going about with a disease in him, this man is going about and carrying a sickness of the spirit, which only rarely and in glimpses, by and with a dread which to him is inexplicable, gives evidence of its presence within.[13]

Towards the end of his confession the Underground Man challenges his abstract judges — whom he addresses as 'gentlemen' — to make good on their righteousness over against him and by extension all the other "down and out" in the world. Surely he does not have a *moral* leg to stand on in thus comparing himself to his fellow men, still Kierkegaard would agree with his implicit affirmation of universal despair. One of the most interesting features of the argument in The Sickness Unto Death — a feature pointing ahead to psychoanalytic theory — is the claim that however contrary the appearances something of despair lurks beneath them. Moreover, some of the least eradicable forms of the sickness are precisely those of which no cognizance is taken. The hiddenness of despair [14] is an important aspect of its universality. For Kierkegaard this despairing condition of mankind

[11] All the headings to be used are taken from The Sickness Unto Death. Below each heading I shall cite parallel passages from it and Letters from the Underworld prior to following through on the analysis of the point up for discussion. The order in which the nature and forms of despair are considered here is also roughly Kierkegaard's own.

[12] Letters from the Underworld, p. 149.

[13] Sickness Unto Death, p. 155.

[14] Cf. below.

is in large part attributable to its inordinate attachment to things earthly and transient. If the worth-whileness of life for an individual is centered in contingency — as it is for the majority — then the threat of non-being is his constant companion. Existentialist writers have often been taken to task for over-emphasizing despair and its related moods at the expense of joy. Apart from the historical reasons for this being the case (western civilization has not exactly engendered a spirit of hope during the past century), in Kierkegaard there is the characteristic Christian mistrust of worldliness as the measure of genuineness. In the most ecstatic moments of human life — childbirth, love, revelation — a note of dread is never far behind. The miraculousness of a supreme work of art is its momentary conquest of anxiety. So it might be said that the Underground Man has had his eyes opened to the daemonic potential not only in himself but in the world at large. From the universality of despair it does not follow that the desire to overcome it is not also universal.

The Hiddenness of This Sickness (Despair)

> Every day I keep discovering in myself elements of the most opposite order conceivable, and can feel them swarming within me, and am aware that, to the very end of my life, they will continue so to swarm. Yet, often as they have striven to manifest themselves outwardly, I have never allowed them to do so.[15]

> Not only that he who suffers it (despair) may wish to hide from it and may be able to do so, to the effect that it can so dwell in a man that no one, no one whatever discovers it; no, rather that it can be so hidden in a man that he himself does not know it.[16]

As suggested previously, the universality of despair is correlated with its hiddenness. On a vulgar view it would appear ridiculous to maintain that everyone is in despair when so many individuals not only act cheerfully but are convinced of their high spirits. Yet it is Kierkegaard's belief, also borne out by some acquaintance with human character, that what a man essentially is cannot be deduced from how he conducts himself in society. Nor, as is common knowledge today, is an individual's opinion of himself any less suspect at face value. In fact, Kierkegaard

[15] Letters from the Underworld, p. 7.
[16] Sickness Unto Death, p. 160.

proceeds to argue that the milder forms of despair are the transparent kind, which is not to say that they should not be taken seriously. But just as the earnest potential suicide will talk little about his act ahead of time, so the individual deeply affected by despair is not apt to parade his condition in front of everyone. Part of his sickness is being locked up within himself, a prisoner of his own passions and thoughts. He may go out of his way to conceal his unhappiness, if not successfully from himself then at least from others. The unnatural animation with which many people talk — trying to seem sincere — is indicative of such a move, though here the concealment breaks down. In severer cases it is frequently remarked that so and so is simply impenetrable, the observer suspecting that something is amiss in spite of the even-tempered and genial deportment of the observed. The Underground Man attempts to get through the chores of the day without letting on to his actual state of mind. Possibly because he does this with so much deliberation and pride (self-centeredness) his pose is a failure. From his own account his contemporaries would not have mistaken him for a happy man. Liza alone saw lovingly and clearly into his wretchedness. Significantly enough he could not even confide in her, for to confide is an attempt to share the relationship with oneself with someone else. This a despairer often cannot do.[17] Those who shrink from the idea of the hiddenness of despair are the same people who insist that all extroverts are happy and all introverts maladjusted.

The Sickness Unto Death Is Despair

> I wish to tell you gentlemen (no matter whether you care to hear it or not), why I have never been able to become an insect. I solemnly declare to you that I have often *wished* to become an insect, but never could attain my desire. I swear to you, gentlemen, that to be overcharged with sensibility is an actual malady — a real, a grievous malady. For humanity's daily need mere ordinary human sensibility ought to suffice, or about one-half or one-quarter of the sensibility which falls to the lot of the average educated man of our miserable nineteenth century. . . .[18]

[17] Cf. below, p. 163.
[18] Letters from the Underworld, p. 9.

> The possibility of this sickness is man's advantage over the beasts; to be sharply observant of this sickness constitutes the Christian's advantage over the natural man; to be healed of this sickness is the Christian's bliss.[19]

There is something Kafkaesque and dialectically proper about the Underground Man's desire to become an insect. For an insect has this advantage over a man: it cannot fall into despair. Kierkegaard views the sickness unto death both as an advantage and a drawback, both as a sickness and a cure, both as man's unique opportunity and his terrible temptation. Ethically-religiously speaking to fall into despair can have the most serious consequences for the individual as, like the Underground Man, he succumbs to nihilism in reflection as well as in deed. Also, to despair of God and forgiveness of sins has consistently been recognized as the greatest sin. On the other hand, it is the possibility of falling into despair, of feeling the claim of the eternal upon oneself, that helps to distinguish man from lesser rational and non-spiritual creatures. The Romantic longing for what was thought of as the simple happiness of savages, particularly relating to sex, and the bourgeois materialism of the French *philosophes* and their disciples are of the same vintage according to which mere self-satisfaction and repose would constitute the *summum bonum* of the human race. Implicit no less in the daydreaming of the Romantic as in the crudeness of the materialist is a denial of man's spiritual nature.

> For not to be in despair may mean to be in despair, and it may also mean to be delivered from being in despair. A sense of security and tranquility may mean that one is in despair, precisely this security, this tranquility, may be despair; and it may mean that one has overcome despair and gained peace. . . . It is not true of despair, as it is of bodily sickness, that the feeling of indisposition is the sickness. By no means. The feeling of indisposition is again dialectical. Never to have been sensible of this indisposition is precisely to be in despair.[20]

The restive disposition characteristic of Romantic writers was one of the healthier features of Romanticism. Never to have be-

[19] Sickness Unto Death, p. 24.
[20] Ibid., pp. 157–158.

come aware of oneself as a spiritual being inadequate in the sight of a higher power which requires it to become a self may be indigenous to Tahitian manhood, but its truthfulness as a mode of existence is far less self-evident than its attractiveness. The Underground Man with all his liabilities must be given credit for his willingness to seek himself and "the good and the beautiful" above and beyond convention, respectability, and surface smoothness. Herein he resembles the Romantic hero: always adrift and when in port forlorn. The dialectic of the Romantic quest whereby it is at once pernicious and salutary is this: the self is sensibly dissatisfied with itself as wanting in something, but it lacks the necessary determinants to find itself, and as a result loses itself still further in fantastic visions and irrelevant possibilities.

Kierkegaard's line of thought on the dialectical advantages of despair as opposed to its ethical-religious dangers to the individual has given rise to numerous misunderstandings throughout the history of Christian theology. He is not saying that any form of suffering is unambiguously good, at the same time he could not maintain with Bernard Shaw that poverty, for example, is necessarily evil. Human beings respond redemptively, sometimes to adversity, on other occasions to well-being. And no one can tell in advance about this matter, least of all the person directly concerned. Despair, respectable opinion would have it, is bad just like the chicken pox. For one thing, it disturbs the self, for another, the world prefers to gaze at a smiling countenance rather than at a sourpuss. No wonder Flaubert choked with rage on beholding his French brethren whose outlook on things was of course perfectly normal. For the Underground Man to want to be an insect is an attempt to evade the responsibility which has been thrust upon him by virtue of his spiritual humanity of which high sensibility forms an integral part. His quest for self-knowledge fails not because he despaired over himself and existence but because he defiantly refused help out of this despair. Nevertheless his having made it, in spite of himself, places him closer to God than any lily in the field. For man, that is the point of the New Testament parable, can only *become* like a lily in the field whereas the lily *is* what it is by nature. Where despair im-

pels a man to become aware of himself as a self for the first time, where it is instrumental in denting his spiritlessness and waking him from his vegetative slumbers it is good. This does not contradict Kierkegaard's other point that to remain in despair is the height of sin.[21]

Despair Viewed Under the Aspect Possibility/Necessity

> Does a wall, forsooth, constitute a full-stop, a signal for the cessation of the struggle, for the mere reason that it and the formula that twice two make four are one? Oh, blindness of blindnesses! What, rather, we should all do is to comprehend everything, to envisage everything — to comprehend and to envisage every impossibility and every stone wall; to accept no single impossibility, no single stone wall, if we do not feel inclined to accept it; to attain (in spite of the most inevitable combinations and the most refutative conclusions of logic) to the eternal truth that one may be at fault even in regard to a stone wall, no matter how much one may *seem* not to be at fault; lastly, in recognizing that fact, to subside silently, and with lips compressed to resignation, and with a bittersweet feeling in one's heart, into a state of inertia.[22]
>
> If one will compare the tendency to run wild in possibility with the efforts of a child to enunciate words, the lack of possibility is like being dumb. Possibility becomes more and more intense — but only in the sense of possibility, not in the sense of actuality; for in the sense of actuality the meaning of intensity is that at least something of that which is possible becomes actual. At the instant something appears possible, and then a new possibility makes its appearance, at last this phantasmagoria moves so rapidly that it is as if everything were possible — and this is precisely the last moment, when

[21] The Underground Man stubbornly clings to his despair as if thereby he could assuage his disgust with the outside world and with himself. Instead of using his powers of observation and great sensitivity as means to a truer mode of existence he tries to consume himself in anger and bitterness. From the ethical point of view, certainly, his lingering in despair makes him progressively more unkind and malicious. There is an analogy between the potential for good and evil of a despairer and the responses of individuals to disaster. No doubt, as a general truth, the riot squads must be kept in readiness to prevent rape, looting, etc. But just as probable is the hypothesis that some individuals will find themselves in the course of such a crisis. For them if not vicariously for the rest of society the disaster turned out a blessing in disguise. Christianly speaking despair is the sickness unto death for which faith is the only cure, but Christianly speaking it may also be the cure of self-complacency and self-righteousness. This, I take it, is what Kierkegaard means by its dialectical nature.

[22] Letters from the Underworld, p. 17.

> the individual becomes for himself a mirage. . . . Necessity is like a sequence of consonants only, but in order to utter them there must in addition be possibility. When this is lacking, when a human existence is brought to pass that it lacks possibility, it is in despair, and every instant it lacks possibility it is in despair. [23]

The Underground Man is obsessed by the idea of freedom. Thus he raves and rants against every supposed obstacle to the satisfaction of his will. At one moment he acknowledges no "impossibility" at the next he subsides "into a state of inertia, with a bittersweet feeling in his heart." As, according to Kierkegaard, "the lack of infinitude means to be desperately narrow-minded and mean-spirited," the lack of finitude "is the powerlessness to obey, to submit to the necessary in oneself, to what may be called one's limit." [24] Once more the Underground Man vacillates between these two extremes. His Romanticism enables him to rise above the drudgery of common sense while his materialism should keep him in good stead with actuality. But being in despair (unrelated to himself) he cannot even take advantage of his virtues which together with his shortcomings function as instruments of self-destruction. His reflective imagination becomes fantastical — "the self becomes a sort of abstract sentimentality which is so inhuman that it does not apply to any person, but inhumanly participates feelingly, so to speak, in the fate of one or another abstraction, e.g., that of mankind in *abstracto*; the more knowledge increases, the more it becomes a kind of inhuman knowing for the production of which man's self is squandered." [25] And his shrewdness instead of easing his path through the pitfalls of worldliness degenerates into a calculating malice that must end in bitter resignation and disillusionment. To pursue a bit further the Romantic/Materialist dichotomy which circumscribes the Underground Man's abortive search for freedom: while the former (Schlegel, Shelley) was (in one of its important phases) bent on tearing down all conventionality and restraint, the latter (Feuerbach, Engels, Marx) reduced *individual* human existence to a level of virtual meaninglessness. In one case the self vaporizes

[23] Sickness Unto Death, pp. 169–171.
[24] Ibid., pp. 166, 169.
[25] Ibid., pp. 163 ff.

itself into disconnected moments of euphoria and depression, in the other it becomes completely subordinated to impersonal forces such as the "logic of history." In the Lutheran sense we are truly free only by being redemptively bound. This means that the expression of individuality derives its ultimate sanction from the grace of God by which it is freed not from sin but from the persistence in sin — the Underground Man's self-torment.

Despair Viewed Under the Aspect of Consciousness

I am extremely self-conscious.[26]

With every increase in the degree of consciousness, and in proportion to that increase, the intensity of despair increases: the more consciousness, the more intense the despair. . . . The devil's despair is the most intense . . . for there is no obscurity which might serve as a mitigating excuse, his despair is therefore absolute defiance.[27]

"I am extremely self-conscious," remarks the Underground Man with a genius for understatement which belies his Russian origins. Like Hamlet he often bemoans his inability to act as he contrasts himself unfavorably with those unplagued by a nineteenth-century sensibility for whom stone walls do not exist. In fact he regards self-consciousness as his sickness and suggests that the whole nineteenth-century has succumbed to the same malady. True enough, Romanticism and German Idealism had attached unprecedented significance to self-consciousness under whose spell could be found together radical revolutionaries, Schleiermachian protestants, Schellingian adorers of nature, and neo-mediaevalists (Novalis). To be extremely conscious of things and of oneself is to be alive, and in spite of what might be said against the diverse utopian movements in nineteenth-century thought, it cannot be denied that their founders and adherents had a tremendous capacity for responding to all sorts of experience. Being conscious, civilized, and alert in one's activity would seem to go hand in hand. But self-consciousness in particular, as Hamlet classically described it, can also have debilitating effects. By virtue of thinking much about himself the individual becomes more and more divorced from external reality. He starts to muse

[26] Letters from the Underground, p. 11.
[27] Sickness Unto Death, p. 175.

and brood over himself; before long he enters into monologues with himself and comes to resent any interruption as unwarranted, embarrassing, and terribly difficult to bear. Soon his egocentricity may make him unfit to live with — and worse, to live with himself. While recognizing a heightening of self-consciousness as a sign of spiritual awakening, Kierkegaard views it simultaneously as a potentiation of despair. For the highly self-conscious individual if nothing else comes to realize that the cause of his difficulty lies within himself. He is at once less deluded than the man of straight action and less contented. Just as beginning students of philosophy wonder why they should examine themselves and various views of the good life when not having thought about these matters before made them feel ignorantly happy, so persons of extreme self-consciousness lose a great deal of innocence and immediacy in exchange for an uncertain understanding of themselves. Hamlet's and the Underground Man's self-consciousness are equally dialetical: without it both would undoubtedly have been more sociably acceptable but without being themselves — pioneers in the life of the spirit. That Hamlet was "saved" and the Underground Man "damned" is another matter.

Despair Over the Earthly or Over Something Earthly

> Foam though I might at the mouth, I needed but to be given a doll to play with, or a cup of sweet tea to drink, and at once I sank to quiescence.[28]
>
> But dead he is not; there is, if you will, life in the characterization. In case everything suddenly changes, everything in the outward circumstances, and the wish is fulfilled, then life enters into him again, immediacy rises again, and he begins to live as fit as a fiddle.[29]

This form of despair is the best-known and the most easily cured. Everyone, in diverse ways and degrees, to be sure, is upset by frustration, sometimes to the point of madness. The cries of the infant for some change in his environment, the sudden tears of childhood, the *Weltschmerz* of the adolescent, the disillusionment of the middle-aged and the nagging bitterness of old age — all these are more or less normal manifestations of man not feeling

[28] Letters from the Underground, p. 6.
[29] Sickness Unto Death, p. 185.

at home in the world and not liking the fact. Although of comparatively little intensity to the Underground Man's *despair over himself and the forgiveness of his sins*, it is worth noting that his advance in self-consciousness and therefore in potentiated despair did not free him from the lighter forms of his sickness. Alas! the man who weeps over the loss of his razor blades will continue to weep over the loss of his razor blades even when weeping over himself. Like an avalanche the course of despair is accumulative. According to Kierkegaard, the individual in having passed through one stage, far from being done with it forever will have to suffer it with the rest of his ailment.[30] "Every actual instant of despair is to be referred back to possibility, every instant the man in despair is contracting it, it is constantly in the present tense, nothing comes to pass here as a consequence of bygone actuality superseded; at every actual instant of despair the despairer bears as his responsibility all the foregoing experience in possibility as a present." [31] Even on a vulgar view it is curious and comic to observe how individuals, let us suppose after surviving a great disaster, having sworn never to get excited about trivialities again, resume doing so as soon as the normal swing of things has been re-established. Most dedicated scholars, monks, and reformers, however hard-working, pious and zealous they may actually be, are not entirely satisfied with their way of life. Here is further evidence for the universality of despair. The Underground Man, notwithstanding his contempt for society, must periodically re-enter it "to be given a doll to play with, or a cup of sweet tea to drink."

Despair About the Eternal or Over Oneself

> I was led by my boundless vanity and pretentiousness to look upon myself with a dissatisfaction that, at times, amounted almost to loathing. . . . Worse still, I would take it into my head that my countenance looked positively stupid, and feel overwhelmed with despair. At home I read a great deal, in a vain endeavor to drown in a flood of external impressions what was seething within me. Yet at times I grew terribly weary of it all and felt, that, come what might,

[30] In Three Stages On Life's Way Kierkegaard speaks of "dethronement" which likewise means that no stage is ever entirely cancelled out.

[31] Sickness Unto Death, pp. 149–150.

I must embark upon some kind of activity. Hence I would suddenly plunge into the lowest depths of foul, dark — well, not so much debauchery, as lewdness, for at that time my passions were keen, and derived all the greater heat from the aching, perpetual discontent with the world of which I was full. . . . Above all things, constant depression seethed within me, a depression which, causing me to thirst for something different, for some sharp contrast, plunged me into vice.[32]

If there does not occur a radical change in the despairer so that he gets on the right path to faith, then such despair (the despair of introversion) will either potentiate itself to a higher form and continue to be introversion, or it breaks through to the outside and demolishes the outward disguise under which the despairing man has been living in his *incognito*. In the latter case such a despairer will then plunge into life, perhaps into the distractions of great undertakings, he will become a restless spirit which leaves only too clear a trace of its actual presence, a restless spirit which wants to forget, and inasmuch as the noise within is so loud stronger means are needed, though of a different sort, from those which Richard III employs in order not to hear his mother's curses. Or he will seek forgetfulness in sensuality, perhaps in debauchery, in desperation he wants to return to immediacy, but constantly with the consciousness of the self, which he does not want to have. . . .[33]

If the sickness unto death began and ceased with despair over the earthly or over something earthly it would be both less severe and more dangerous to the despairer; the former, because then reconciliation grounded in the flux of things would always have a higher degree of probability, and the latter, because the self in its attempt to evade the claim of the eternal upon itself merely postpones the issue by stubbornly persisting in childishness. Only children and idiots have legitimate cause not to despair of themselves. As for the rest of humanity this is either a pose enchantingly displayed or a deliberate device to cultivate false innocence. Sometime between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one it should dawn on the loser of razor blades that his attitude towards the loss has as much to do with his resulting unhappiness as the loss

[32] Letters from the Underworld, pp. 50–55.
[33] Sickness Unto Death, p. 199.

itself. For the more serious questions of life this recognition is a milestone in spiritual growth.

The similarity in language as well as in content of Dostoevsky's and Kierkegaard's accounts of introspective despair almost defies belief. Like the puritanically-bred young girl away from home at her first fraternity party who goes off in a corner all by herself (so that *de facto* the party has ceased to exist for her) or plunges recklessly into the fun (so as to make up for her dour youth), the despairer in introspective despair has a choice between abandoning himself frantically to outside distractions or withdrawing still further into his shell. For the Underground Man a so-called higher pleasure, books, initially presented the former possibility, but not for long: "hence I would suddenly plunge into the lowest depths of foul, dark — well, not so much debauchery, as lewdness. . . ." To follow Kierkegaard's analysis here: no radical change has occurred in the Underground Man's relationship to himself, consequently every activity he undertakes merely serves to cover up his affliction as eventually he yields to the morphine of sensual enticement. Having despaired over himself he cannot take refuge in blaming the world for his condition. The hostile attitude of many Christian writers including Kierkegaard to cultural values as a substitute for faith may be said to rest on the Underground Man's confusion between reading as a delightful respite from the cares of daily living and as an answer to man's "metaphysical dread." As the beautiful sunset is succeeded if not by an earthquake then by a dull evening, so all aesthetic experience is subject to evaporation or decline. And what then with the agonized self which made it its "ultimate concern?" Corresponding exactly to Kierkegaard's account the Underground Man "will seek forgetfulness in sensuality, perhaps in debauchery, in desperation he wants to return to immediacy, but constantly with the consciousness of the self, which he does not want to have."

The Despair of Willing Despairingly to be Oneself — Defiance

> Occasionally repentance would seize me, but I always drove it forth again, for I was too weary to do aught but fall in with — rather, put up with — whatsoever chanced to happen. Yet all the while there was a way of escape which reconciled me to everything — namely the way of escape contained in my visionary cult of the "great and the

beautiful." I did nothing but dream and dream of it; for three whole months on end I, crouching in my den, did nothing else. . . . That is to say, I had a sort of blind belief that one day some miracle, some external circumstance, would suddenly cause the present to break and become widened, and that suddenly there would dawn upon me a horizon of congenial, productive, fair, and above all things, *instant* activity (though in what manner *instant* I did not know), and that at last I should issue into God's world, mounted on a white horse, and crowned with laurels. . . . In those visions I would rise superior to all mankind; all men were in the dust before me, and forced to recognize my perfection as I extended to them my pardon. Yet I had not spent more than three months upon these ecstasies of mine when I began to feel a renewed inclination for intercourse with my fellowmen. . . .[34]

If the despairing self is active, it is related to itself only as experimenting with whatever it be that it undertakes, however great it may be, however astonishing, however persistently carried out. It acknowledges no power over it, hence in the last resort it lacks seriousness and is able to conjure up only a show of seriousness when the self bestows upon its experiments its utmost attention. Like the fire which Prometheus stole from the gods, so does this mean to steal from God the thought which is seriousness, that God is regarding one, instead of which the despairing self is content with regarding itself, and by that it is supposed to bestow upon its undertakings infinite interest and importance, whereas it is precisely this which makes them mere experiments. For though this self were to go so far in despair that it becomes an experimental god, no derived self can by regarding itself give itself more than it is: it nevertheless remains from first to last the self, by self-duplication it becomes neither more nor less than the self. The self is its own master, so it is said, absolutely its own lord, and precisely this is despair, but it also is what it regards as its pleasure and enjoyment. . . . The self wants to enjoy the entire satisfaction of making itself into itself, of developing itself, of being itself; it wants to have the honor of this poetical, this masterly plan according to which it has understood itself. And yet in the last resort it is a riddle how it understands itself; just at the *instant* when it seems to be nearest to having the fabric finished it can arbitrarily resolve the whole thing into nothing.[35]

[34] Letters from the Underworld, pp. 64–67.
[35] Sickness Unto Death, pp. 200–203.

Once again there is a remarkable parallel here between the Underground Man's narrative and Kierkegaard's analysis. Note, to start with, how the Underground Man's stratagem of "escape" advances from reading through debauchery to self-worship. Man despairs last of wanting to be God — the Underground Man's theology is indeed excellent. His whole style of writing suddenly takes a religious turn. Thus he speaks of a blind belief in some miracle which would save him at an instant, of issuing forth into God's world mounted on a white horse, and as a perfect being extending pardon to wretched sinners groveling before him in the dust. Not even Nietzsche's Superman put things so clearly.

What Kierkegaard calls "experimenting" is for the Underground Man a "way of escape contained in [his] visionary cult of the 'great and the beautiful.' " Kierkegaard's insistence that these experiments are lacking in seriousness is corroborated in the Underground Man's case not only by their failure to bring about a permanent reconciliation but by the attitude which informs his participation in them. After all his reflection over himself in relation to his despair he continues to believe that "some external circumstance would suddenly cause the present to break" as if he had relapsed into childhood. And what a paradise he has mapped out for himself! "Mounted on a white horse and crowned with laurels" it is hard to see how any room would be left vacant for God to view this magnificent spectacle of one of His creatures taking over. In Kierkegaard's terms the Underground Man "bestows upon [his] undertakings infinite interest and importance" going so far that "[he] becomes an 'experimental god' " though, it must be added "[he] remains from first to last the self, neither more nor less than the self." Corresponding to "having the fabric finished the self can arbitrarily resolve the whole thing into nothing" is the Underground Man's admission that "having spent more than three months upon these ecstasies of mine, I began to feel a renewed inclination for intercourse with my fellowmen." The soap bubble had burst.

Not unlike Napoleon in this respect the Underground Man loves these visions of grandeur in which he sees himself "rising superior to all mankind." Without being aware of it, it is here that he puts his finger on the root of his sickness unto death:

insatiable pride! Quite properly Kierkegaard relates the entire phenomenon of despair to the doctrine of sin. What does the Underground Man really want to experience? "All men were in the dust before me, and forced to recognize my perfection as I extended to them my pardon." He wants to experience being god, but a very particular kind of god: his will should be done at everybody else's expense. There is no mercy, no forgiveness, no justice, grace or love to be expected from his throne. His experiment comes to an end, but the twentieth century has experienced similar instances of real men rising from the underground for considerably longer intervals than this. The death of God, which Nietzsche celebrated as the dawn of a new freedom for mankind in their bonds, turned into the nightmare Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard warned about.

Sin Is Not a Negation But a Position

> I have not only invariably failed to recognize as unseemly, but never failed to commit, actions which — well, actions which all men commit, but which I have always perpetrated just when I was most acutely sensible that I ought not to do them. The more I have recognized what is good and what constitutes "the great and the beautiful," the deeper I have plunged into the mire, and the more I have been ready to smear myself over with the sticky stuff. . . . Who was it first said, first propounded the theory, that man does evil only because he is blind to his own interests, but that if he were enlightened, if his eyes were opened to his real, his normal interests, he would at once cease to do evil, and become virtuous and noble for the reason that, being now enlightened and brought to understand what is best for him, he would discern his true advantage only in what is good (since it is a known thing that no man of set purpose acts against his own interests), and therefore would of necessity also *do* what is good? Oh, the simplicity of the youth who said this! Oh, the utter artlessness of the prattler! [36]

What determinant is it then that Socrates lacks in determining what sin is? It is will, defiant will. The Greek intellectualism was too happy, too naive, too aesthetic, too ironical, too witty . . . too sinful to be able to get it into its head that a person knowingly could fail to do the good, or knowingly, with knowledge of what is right, do

[36] Letters from the Underworld, pp. 9–10, 25.

what was wrong. The Greek spirit proposes an intellectual categorical imperative.[37]

Unlike the Underground Man, Kierkegaard was far from regarding Socrates as a "simple youth" or "artless prattler." At times he came close to worshipping him as the philosopher's philosopher who never held a chair in philosophy but philosophized in his "gadfly" fashion on the streets of Athens. The "solitary individual," Kierkegaard, ostracized by his complacent contemporaries, often identified himself and his task with the sublime martyrdom of the Greek ironist. This makes his agreement with the Underground Man that sin is a position rather than a negation profoundly important. In direct opposition to Socrates Kierkegaard is saying: because their wills are defiant, men are perfectly capable of committing an act which they know to be morally wrong at the time of carrying it out. Both Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard were Christian voluntarists and thus opposed to the intellectualist assumption dominating the great tradition from Socrates to Kant that the ability of an individual to act in accord with his will hinges on the proper understanding of his own nature and condition. Though the psychoanalytic movement owing to its involvement in the irrational aspects of human nature has lately been associated with Christian anthropology, this is belied, for one thing, by the note of comfort many analysts communicate to their patients to the effect that having gotten to know what is really wrong with them through treatment they will proceed to cure themselves. Christianly speaking that is an untenable position, presupposing a harmonious working-together of intellect and will which, if extant after the Fall, would annul the need for salvation. Kierkegaard somewhere remarks concerning Kant's categorical imperative that if on each occasion while saying "I ought" man would receive a kick in the pants the "I can" would surely follow.

The life of the Underground Man obviously refutes any necessary connection or even high correlation between self-knowledge and self-redemption through moral action, but apart from this fictional character who might be dismissed as a monstrosity, there

[37] Sickness Unto Death, pp. 220–221.

have always been great difficulties with the Socratic view of evil as ignorance. No doubt — and Kierkegaard fully acknowledges this — a great deal of moral evil is the result of unenlightenment. In quest of reasons for disliking someone it is always a fertile field of speculation whether stupidity or meanness should be the ground of one's aversion. A German saying has it that against stupidity even the gods fight in vain. On the other hand, it is equally apparent that intelligence aided by considerable self-understanding is not incompatible with a conscious choice of evil. The Underground Man defines man as an ungrateful creature. He is also a spiteful one who on occasion would rather act against his previously discerned self-interest if by so doing he can deflate someone else. Not only is Socrates unable to account for this common type of behavior (Kierkegaard would argue because he had no revelation of the Christian notion of sin before God), but he also neglects to consider how ignorance in a human being may be willful rather than natural. He must have realized in the course of his teaching that some individuals he conversed with never opened themselves up to what he had to say, never allowed themselves to be changed by his dialectical "midwifery." And what about those who never came to listen to him which, symbolically speaking, constitutes the majority of the human race? Ignorance of the good in many instances would not seem to be a better excuse than ignorance of the law. Kierkegaard points to Socratic irony with its double-meaning of 'understanding' as evidence that Socrates was aware of limitations to his view. Men understand matters without understanding them, that is to say, translating them into existential realities, and as a result find themselves in absurd postures. But beyond suggesting this Socrates could not go. Sin as a determinant of the will was unknown to him and Greek culture generally.[38]

[38] This limitation in Greek thought emerges with particular sharpness in Plato's conception of the ruling class in his Republic. How could he possibly assume that any group of men, select as they might be, could be trusted to act selflessly over a long period of time? To be sure, Plato entertained grave doubts about finding candidates for the job of philosopher-king. But this is only a preliminary problem. The real issue, Christianly speaking, consists in the sinfulness of all men however intelligent, well-trained, and detached they might be. Lord Acton's famous dictum on power is the prologomona to any Christian political philosophy. No form of government is *a priori* beyond suspicion which is not to say that one may not be

The Sin of Despairing Over One's Sin

> I often told myself that I would greatly like to know whether the same delight fell to the lot of other men. First of all, however, let me explain to you wherein that delight lay. It lay in a clear consciousness of my degradation — in a feeling that I had reached the last wall, and that the whole thing was base, and could never be otherwise, and that no escape therefrom was to be looked for, and that it was not possible for me to become a different man, and that, even if I still retained sufficient faith and energy to become a different man, I should not wish to become so, but that I would rather do nothing at all in the matter, since to undergo such a change might not be worthwhile. . . . Hence may be deduced the fact that oversensibility causes a villain to hug his villainy to himself if he really perceives that he is a villain.[39]

> Despair over sin is an attempt to maintain oneself by sinking still deeper. As one who ascends in a balloon rises by casting weights from him, so does the despairing man sink by casting from him the good (for the weight of the good is uplift), he sinks, doubtless, he thinks he is rising — he does indeed become lighter. Sin itself is the struggle of despair; but when strength is exhausted there must needs be a new potentiation, a new demoniacal introversion, and this is despair over one's sin. . . . This despair does not will to be itself with Stoic doting upon itself, nor with self-deification, willing in this way, doubtless mendaciously, yet in a certain sense in terms of its perfection; no, with hatred for existence it wills to be itself, to be itself in terms of its misery; it does not even in defiance or defiantly will to be itself, but to be itself in spite; it does not even will in defiance to tear itself free from the Power which posited it, it wills to obtrude upon this power in spite, to hold on to it out of malice.[40]

Note once again how the development of the Underground Man's despair is illuminated by Kierkegaard's phenomenology: having despaired over the world and himself and sought escape

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superior to the rest. It is a question of deciding for the least potentially sinful kind. And here much though by no means every consideration favors democracy where checks and balances are imposed on the sinfulness of men in power. — Had Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky been understood when the twentieth century began some of the outrages perpetrated by civilized society if not prevented might at least have come as less of a surprise.

[39] Letters from the Underworld, pp. 10–11.

[40] Sickness Unto Death, pp. 207, 241.

successively in "higher pleasures," "lower pleasures," illusions of grandeur — experiments at being god — he now reaches the conclusion that since he cannot become a different man he does not even wish to do so, preferring to do nothing at all except "hug his villainy to himself." Thus he himself explains his contemptible treatment of Liza. Kierkegaard defines this kind of despair as "a new demoniacal introversion: with hatred for existence it wills to be itself, to be itself in terms of its misery." No longer holding out hope for any change in his condition the Underground Man as despairer has nothing to lose by doing what he pleases, however monstrous and diabolical the heights of his folly. To be without illusions is rightly reckoned as a desirable state for human beings, but to be without hope — a state actually attained by a few thinkers since the early nineteenth century — is aside from the accompanying intensity of despair an invitation to grotesque destructiveness. An intellectualist theory of ethics would argue that being free from illusions is far more difficult than being devoid of hope, inasmuch as the former demands rare perceptiveness while the latter requires no particular talent whatsoever. Anybody, on this view, can give up hope if the pinch of existence gets too tight. Christianly speaking, the state of disillusionment is comparatively easy to enter into given a minimum capacity for reflection. But hopefulness or hopelessness, there is the rub. For the Underground Man to despair over his sin is, Christianly speaking, a tremendous accomplishment: few men even among those free from illusions have the courage to "sink still deeper by casting from them the good." Such action, horrible as it is, makes far greater claims on the individual than building castles in the air or touching things up with ephemeral sweetness and light. It is always the dialectical advantage of the nihilist over the philistine to be spirited and a little bit more honest with himself. There is a genuine sense, as it were, in which Hitler's and Stalin's supporters were guiltier than their idols. The Underground Man, this much must be said for him, would not have stood on his ignorance or his right of security. He despaired "bravely."

Giving himself up to malice now becomes his sole refuge. In a harangue full of self-pity and self-torment he accuses Liza [41]

[41] Cf. p. 147 above.

of having come to his apartment with ulterior motives and proceeds to pour vinegar into her wound by adding that he had been 'playing' with her all along. Thereupon he reveals himself to her as a foul unseemly creature without any discernible relation to the hero figure he supposes she must have imagined him to be after their encounter in the brothel. How could he possibly save Liza, he remarks with a logic no less coherent than that informing his previous sermon on the virtues of matrimony, if his need for salvation is so much greater than hers? But having confided this to Liza he will hate her for the rest of his life:

> Nor shall I ever be able to pardon you the reason why I am confessing this to you. . . . Other worms may be no better than I am, yet at least, for some God-only-known reason, they seem never to look foolish as I do, who all my life shall have to be slapped on the cheek by lice, since that is my *metier*. But what does it matter to you whether you understand this or not? And what does it matter to me whether you meet your ruin in this house or not? And cannot you understand, that, having told you all this, I shall for ever hate you for having heard it? Man but once in his life makes such confessions as mine, and then only when he is in a fit of hysteria. And, after it all, how is it that you are still to flout and torture me, instead of taking your departure?[42]

Kierkegaard views the relationship of despairer (the Underground Man) to confidant (Liza) as follows:

> Poetically the catastrophe (assuming poetice that the protagonist was e.g. a king or emperor) might be fashioned in such a way that the hero had the confidant put to death. One could imagine such a demoniacal tyrant who felt the need of talking to a fellow man about his torment, and this way consumed successively a whole lot of men; for to be his confidant was certain death. — It would be the task of a poet to represent this agonizing self-contradiction in a demoniac man who is not able to get along without a confidant, and not able to have a confidant, and then resolving it in such a way as this.[43]

The Underground Man cannot consume himself because of his sickness unto death. In order to appease his overwrought mind

[42] Letters from the Underworld, pp. 140–141.
[43] Sickness Unto Death, p. 200.

and corrupted heart he requires a confidant who must be spiritually healthier than himself to listen to him lovingly and patiently but, self-contradiction, literally self-effacing, who must not remind him of her spiritual superiority in this regard.[44] Liza certainly is not a woman unacquainted with suffering and vice. She would be the last to judge the Underground Man from Olympian heights of middle-class respectability. She also knows what it means to be in despair, and has told him so about herself. Ironically enough it is her being her kind-hearted and open self that drives him to paroxysms of hatred. He cannot tolerate direct confrontation by individuals like Liza who have had to put up with much more concrete misery than himself without abstracting themselves into the rôle of magnificent sinners, — which is not to belittle the special risks incurred by the Underground Man in affirming his despair. Nevertheless he is offended by Liza's selflessness and placidity especially after his confession. Offense, according to Kierkegaard, is a mixture of admiration and envy. "An admirer who feels that he cannot be happy by surrendering himself elects to become envious of that which he admires. So he speaks another language, and in that language of his the thing which he really admires is called stupid, insipid, and a queer sort of thing." [45] He is really a great admirer of Liza, but his habitual attitude towards all of existence being hatred and offense — he is forever offended and insulted by the smallest trifle — and his demoniac despair having passed the point of no return, humanly speaking, he discards Liza from the ken of his existence and thus eliminates the last possibility of recovering his spiritual equilibrium.

The Sin of Despairing of the Forgiveness of Sins

> To me, love connotes tyrannisation and moral ascendancy. Any other love has never come within my purview, and I have even gone so far as to arrive at the firm conclusion that, properly speaking, love lies in the peculiar right of tyrannisation which the fact of being loved confers. Even in my most secret soul I have never been able to think

[44] According to Kierkegaard it is for precisely this reason that God had to become flesh. Only the lowliest of men — most-powerful *incognito* — could effectively identify with publicans and sinners.

[45] Sickness Unto Death, p. 217.

of love as aught but a struggle which begins with hatred and ends with moral subjection.[46]

When a sinner despairs of the forgiveness of sins it is almost as if he were directly picking a quarrel with God, it sounds in effect like a rejoinder when he says, "No, there is not any forgiveness of sins, it is an impossibility. . . ." On the whole it is unbelievable what confusion has invaded the religious sphere since in man's relationship to God there has been abolished the "Thou shalt," which is the only regulative principle. This "Thou shalt" ought to be a part of every definition of the religious; instead of which people have employed fantastically conceptions of God as an ingredient in human self-importance, so as to be self-important over against God.[47]

The greatest and hardest (it has been called the 'impossible imperative') Christian commandment is "Thou shalt love" — God, neighbor, and even enemy. It is fitting that the Underground Man can only visualize love as tyrannisation, the exact opposite of *agape*. What Kierkegaard equates with despair of the forgiveness of sins, namely, "picking a quarrel with God," corresponds to the Underground Man's confession: "never at any time have I found it possible to say, 'Father forgive me, and I will sin no more.' I always found it irksome to sit with folded hands." [48] Thus he places himself beyond the pale of even that redemptive Power for whom the impossible can become possible. Is there any better refutation of Nietzsche's identification of power with self-assertion and of weakness with compassion than the Underground Man's quarrel with God?

Dostoevsky's portrait of the Underground Man ranks with Shakespeare's Macbeth, Milton's Satan, and Melville's Captain Ahab as one of the supreme characterizations of despair in western literature. Like all great works of art Letters from the Underworld is at once unmistakably particular — Russian, Dostoevskian, nineteenth century — and universal — Christian, human, and truthful. The Underground Man also experienced life "as a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing," but the manner in which

[46] Letters from the Underworld, p. 144.
[47] Sickness Unto Death, pp. 245–246.
[48] Letters from the Underworld, p. 20.

he arrived at this apprehension was quite different from Macbeth's. Whereas Shakespeare's hero succumbed to the *hybris* of the Renaissance, unbridled ambition, the Underground Man's defiance was rooted in boredom and anxiety. Feeling deserted by God or having withdrawn from Him on his own volition, his experiments with being "god" are intended to cover up the pervasive threat of meaninglessness not only in his life but in modern life generally. That is the main reason for the effectiveness of Dostoevsky's conception of his situation: while timeless it lights up our times with perspicacity and depth matched alone perhaps by Kierkegaard's authorship. Just as Dostoevsky's Underground Man turned out to be the pregenitor of the tortured souls in Kafka and Camus, so is Kierkegaard's dialectical theology the prototypal embodiment of virtually every major current of twentieth-century religious thought. What then, it would naturally occur to many, brings the Underground Man's mode of existence and the categories of Kierkegaard's theological thinking into such close agreement? — The Underground Man's mode of existence testifies to the death of God and its consequences which western society has alternately bemoaned and plotted since the Enlightenment, and Kierkegaard's theology constitutes the seminal work of reflection, by a religious man, on this plotted or bemoaned eclipse of God and its ominous significance for western civilization. So it came about that The Sickness Unto Death is the finest commentary on Letters from the Underworld.

RENAISSANCE AND MODERN THOUGHT ON THE LAST THINGS: A STUDY IN CHANGING CONCEPTIONS

C. A. PATRIDES
University of California
Berkeley

Of the changes that have taken place in theology since the Renaissance, none is more striking than the re-interpretation of the Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man, which has passed from the realm of history to that of 'myth.' Equally impressive, however, are the changes that have taken place in eschatology. This disagreement with our ancestors is not revolutionary on every point, since at least one fundamental idea, affirmed by George Hakewill in the earlier seventeenth century, still holds true. "That the world shall haue an end," wrote Hakewill, "is as cleere to *Christianity*, as that there is a Sun in the firmament: And therefore, whereas there can hardly be named any other article of our faith, which some *Heretiques* haue not presumed to impugne or call into question; yet to my remembrance I never met with any who questioned this; & though at this day many & eager be the differences among *Christians* in other points of Religion, yet in this they all agree & ever did, that the world shall haue an end."[1] If on this, however, all Christians are agreed, the exact time of the Day of the Lord has been the subject of speculation ever since the advent of Christianity, not to mention Jewish apocalyptic thought. To us, of course, the *dies iræ* may seem somewhat remote, particularly since astronomical deductions indicate that human life will yet last a million million years, that we are at the dawn rather than the twilight of the history of our solar system.[2] Our predecessors in Christianity, however, did not enjoy such an assurance; they were always fully aware that the omnipotent God could end history at will and on certain occasions became convinced of the imminence of the Last Judgment. The tradition commenced

[1] An Apologie of the Power and Providence of God (Oxford, 1627), p. 441.
[2] Sir James Jeans, The Universe Around Us (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 336 ff.

with St. Paul, who early in his ministry was sufficiently persuaded of the nearness of the world's end as to warn the faithful that "the time is short." [3] Subsequent thinkers endeavored to be more specific: in one instance it was calculated that the Second Advent would occur in the year 195 A.D.,[4] while on another it was affirmed by Julius Africanus and later by Lactantius that the end of the world would take place in the year 500.[5] But of far greater popularity proved the time-honored belief, which we find re-iterated in the Epistle of Barnabas in the middle of the second century and subsequently elaborated by St. Augustine, that the world would end in its 6000th year.[6] During the Renaissance, albeit a number of apologists like Alexander Ross denied the validity of this view,[7] it was readily accepted by most. The world, in Hugh Latimer's flat declaration, "was ordained to endure (as all learned men affirme and proove it with Scripture) sixe thousand yeares." [8] Holding in mind the fact that it was commonly accepted that the creation occurred about the year 4000 B.C.,[9] the age of the world was normally divided into three periods, there being, in the words of John Donne, "(as it is ordinarily received) 2000. yeares of nature, between the Creation, and the giving of the Law by *Moses*, and 2000. yeares of the Law between that, and the comming of Christ, and 2000. yeares of Grace and Gospell between Christ first, and his second comming." [10] Clearly, however, the years of Grace were drawing

[3] I Corinthians 7:29. Cf. James 5:8: "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." On the belief in the imminence of the Last Judgment among the prophets, see J. E. Fison, The Christian Hope (London, 1954), pp. 103 ff.

[4] Charles Bigg, The Christian Platonists of Alexandria (Oxford, 1913), p. 144.

[5] James T. Shotwell, The History of History (New York, 1939), I, 349; Karl Löwith, Meaning in History (Chicago, 1949), p. 171. For a survey of the various occasions in history when the Last Judgment was felt to be imminent, see Zanchius, Speculum Christianum, trans. Henry Nelson (London, 1614), pp. 13 ff.

[6] R. L. P. Milburn, Early Christian Interpretations of History (London, 1954), pp. 79–80.

[7] Questions and Answers upon Genesis (London, 1620), p. 20.

[8] Fruitfull Sermons (London, 1635), fol. 141^{v}.

[9] For a standard defense of the thesis that the world was created "less than 6000 yeares ago," see Richard Baxter, The Reasons of the Christian Religion (London, 1667), pp. 582 ff. James Ussher, attempting to be more specific, fixed the year of creation at 4004 B.C., while Lightfoot narrowed it down to the week of October 18–24 of the same year. See Bernard Ramm, The Christian View of Science and Scripture (London, 1955), p. 121.

[10] LXXX Sermons (London, 1640), p. 20. The threefold division of universal

to their close; justifiably, indeed, John Swan, calculating the age of the world in 1653, declared it to have reached its 5657th year; [11] nor was he alone in his estimate, other authorities concurring within a century either way.[12] All told, the men of the Renaissance could rest assured that their lives would not be prematurely arrested, the world having yet two to four centuries of life in store — provided, of course, there was no error in calculation. But this being quite possible, speculations ran wild. Philipp Nicolai bluntly fixed the date of the Last Judgment in the year 1670,[13] while Edward Benlowes resolved the problem in a manner sufficient of itself to alarm many individuals: as regards the "ConfLagratIo MVnDI," he warned his readers, "thIs year May bVrnIng CLose thy enD"; for the capital letters both of the Latin and of the English, when re-arranged, specifically designate the year MDCLVII as the end of the world.[14] We may safely dismiss this and similar claims as curiosities of no inherent value, yet when all is said, we cannot deny that the Renaissance thinkers on the whole believed the Last Judgment to have been near at hand, Milton himself affirming in 1641 that the Son of God is "shortly-expected." [15] Not that Milton or the majority of his contemporaries were willing to fix the exact date of the return of Christ; on the contrary, the orthodox thinkers were in agreement with Sir Thomas Browne that "to determine the day and yeare of this inevitable time, is not onely convincible and statute madnesse, but also manifest impiety." [16] Nevertheless the imminence

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history is re-iterated by Nicholas Byfield, An Exposition upon the Epistle of the Collossians (London, 1628), III, 17–18; Henry Ainsworth, Annotations upon . . . Genesis ([Amsterdam], 1616), sig. $B2^{1}$; and esp. Thomas Rogers, Of the Ende of the World (London, 1577), fol. 1–3.

[11] Calamus Mensurans (London, 1653).

[12] For a summary of the estimates of Pareus, Bullinger, Melanchthon, Perkins, Willet, and older authors, see William Nisbet, A Golden Chaine of Time (Edinburgh, 1650), pp. 2–3. For individual opinions, see in addition John More, A Table from the Beginning of the World to this Day (Cambridge, 1593), and Laurentius Codomannus, Chronographia. A Description of Time, 3rd edn. (London, 1596).

[13] A Prophesie of Doomes-Day, trans. David Forbes, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh, 1631).

[14] The Summary of Wisdome (London, 1657), sig. $A2^{v}$. This conceit is not original; it was current during the Renaissance, as Swan reported elsewhere, dismissing it as "altogether idle" (Speculum Mundi [Cambridge, 1635], pp. 19–20).

[15] Of Reformation, in Works (Columbia edn.), III, 78.

[16] Religio Medici, ed. J.-J. Denonain (Cambridge, 1955), p. 60. For Milton's

of the Second Advent was upheld far and wide. "I cannot nor dare not prescribe the day and houre of that iudgement," wrote Godfrey Goodman, bishop of Gloucester. "Yet sure I am, that the time cannot bee long absent." [17] Joseph Hall, bishop of Norwich, concurred: "For my part," he declared, "I am perswaded in my soul, that the coming of our Saviour is neer at hand." [18] Repeatedly, indeed, we encounter warnings that the Renaissance stood witness to the "last Remnants of Time," [19] that "the coming of Christ is not far off," [20] that "the end is neere," [21] that the last age of the world has arrived and is fast drawing to its close.[22] These views were not set forth without adequate supporting arguments. The New Testament was clear on the signs that were to precede the Last Judgment,[23] and each of those signs, it was affirmed, was gradually becoming evident. As Henry Vaughan put it, "by all signs / Our fulness too is now come in." [24] A num-

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concurrence see De Doctrina Christiana, in Works, XVI, 339–41. This thesis is grounded upon the words of Jesus that no one knows the exact day of the Second Coming, "not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

[17] The Fall of Man (London, 1616), p. 383.

[18] The Revelation Unrevealed (London, 1650), p. 10.

[19] Francis Rous, The Diseases of the Time (London, 1622), p. 422.

[20] John Baker, The XII Articles of our Christian Faith (London, 1581), sig. $M3^{1}$.

[21] Thomas Thompson, Antichrist Arraigned (London, 1618), p. 13.

[22] See, for instance, Richard Sibbes, Divine Meditations, 3rd edn. (London, 1658), p. 68; Samuel Ward, The Life of Faith, 3rd edn. (London, 1622), p. 103; John Carpenter, A Preparative to Contentation (London, 1597), p. 123; Theophilus Gale, A Discourse of Christ's Coming (London, 1673), sig. $A2^{1}$; Thomas Beard, The Theatre of Gods Judgements, 3rd edn. (London, 1631), p. 3; and the fuller discussions by William Dewsbury, A True Prophecy (London, 1654), and Henry Holland, The Seven Vials (London, 1628) and The Sounding of the Last Two Trumpets (London, 1641). See also the authors cited by Geoffrey F. Nuttall, The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience (Oxford, 1946), pp. 108–12, and the discussion by U. M. Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama (London, 1936), Ch. I, passim.

[23] Besides the Johannine Apocalypse, the most pertinent chapter in the N. T. is Mark 13, often spoken of as the 'Little Apocalypse,' and its equivalent in Matthew 24–25. In addition see 2 Peter 3, 2 Timothy 3, Luke 17: 20–37 and 21:25–36, and the groups of parables discussed by C. H. Dodd, The Parables of the Kingdom (London, 1935), Ch. V. For the literalistic interpretation of these 'signs' during the Renaissance, see Nicholas Byfield, The Rule of Faith (London, 1626), pp. 511 ff.; Henry Holland, The Historie of Adam (London, 1606), sig. $Ss2^{1}$ ff.; Milton, Works, XVI, 341 ff.; Samuel Gardiner, Doomes-Day Booke (London, 1606), pp. 24 ff.; Thomas Draxe, An Alarum to the Last Judgment (London, 1615), pp. 13 ff.; etc. For a version in verse, see the early part of Thomas Dekker's Dekker his Dreame (London, 1620).

[24] The Jews, ll. 26–27.

ber of commentators were persuaded, for one, that nature was "an old Dotard," [25] and agreed with John Andrewes that "All creatures ware old with this aged world; this is even the last houre, the world cannot continue long." [26] Other apologists affirmed that the Antichrist, who was to appear shortly before the return of the Son of God, had clearly arrived in the person of the Pope.[27] Finally, the general deterioration of conditions due to precede the Day of the Lord was evident in the fact that the later Renaissance was experiencing "times of sorrow, and times of affliction, times of distresse & times of visitation." [28] In view of these opinions, it is not difficult to imagine the terror of the residents of London in the year 1666: already prepared with a series of pronouncements warning of impending catastrophes, and faced in addition with the supernatural significance of the number '666,' the popular mind easily concluded that the beginning of the end was at hand as the nation's capital was stricken by the

[25] Philippe de Mornay, The Trvenesse of Christian Religion (London, 1617), p. 101.

[26] A Golden Trumpet (London, 1648), sig. $A5^{v}$. On the widespread belief in the decay of nature, which finds its most eloquent exponent in Donne, see the studies by Charles M. Coffin, John Donne and the New Philosophy (New York, 1937), pp. 130 ff.; 264 ff.; Marjorie H. Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle (Evanston, 1950), pp. 65 ff., 105 ff.; Paul H. Kocher, Science and Religion in Elizabethan England (San Marino, 1953), pp. 82 ff.; Richard F. Jones, Ancients and Moderns (St. Louis, 1936), pp. 23 ff.; George Williamson, "Mutability, Decay, and Seventeenth Century Melancholy," ELH, II (1935), 121–50; and Victor Harris, All Coherence Gone (Chicago, 1949). Opposed to the idea of nature's decay were such diverse personalities as Milton, Ben Jonson, Pepys, Jeremy Taylor, and others, with the champion in this cause being Hakewill in his Apologie (1627; see above, Note 1), augmented in the 3rd edn. (1635) to include a detailed refutation of the thesis of Goodman's Fall of Man (1616). Cf. Ronald W. Hepburn, "George Hakewill: The Virility of Nature," Journal of the History of Ideas, XVI (1955), 135–50. Time only served to justify Hakewill: for by the Restoration Joseph Glanvill was able to affirm that "the sole Instances of those illustrious Heroes, Cartes, Cassendus, Galileo, Tycho, Harvey, More, Digby; will strike dead the opinion of the worlds decay, and conclude it, in its Prime." (The Vanity of Dogmatizing [London, 1661], p. 240).

[27] Of the numerous treatises attempting to 'prove' this, see Leonard Wright, The Hunting of Antichrist (London, 1589); John Carpenter, A Preparative to Contentation (London, 1597), esp. Ch. III–VII; Rudolph Walther, Antichrist, trans. J. Olde (London, 1556); Thomas Thompson, Antichrist Arraigned (London, 1618), Pts. II–III; Thomas Beard, Antichrist the Pope of Rome (London, 1625); and George Downame, A Treatise Concerning Antichrist (London, 1603), expanded for an international audience in Papa Antichristo (London, 1620). To Catholics, of course, the Antichrist was Luther.

[28] John Wall, Jacobs Ladder (London, 1626), p. 50.

great fire of that year, preceded by the devastating plague of the year before.[29]

Now there is a tendency among modern apologists of the faith to regard the Second Advent and the accompanying Universal Resurrection, Last Judgment and Final Conflagration as 'symbols' of the actual last events of history. As against this attitude, however, orthodox circles during the Renaissance unanimously accepted the Scriptural affirmation of the *eschata* of cosmic history as the literal truth. The appeal made by hermeneutics was to a number of definite passages in the Scriptures,[30] and it was upon these that the picture of the *dies iræ* was erected in the popular mind. Shakespeare, in a passage rightly described as "distinctly Christian," [31] affirmed that

> the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind.[32]

However, it is to Saluste du Bartas, the great Biblical poet, that we must turn for a more thorough and, according to the marginal note, "lively description of the end of the world":

> One day the Rocks from top to toe shall quiver,
> The Mountaines melt and all in sunder shiver:
> The Heav'ns shall rent for feare; the lowly Fields,
> Puft up, shall swell to huge and mightie Hils:
> Rivers shall dry: or if in any Flood
> Rest any liquor, it shall all be bloud:
> The Sea shall all be fire, and on the shoar
> The thirsty Whales with horrid noyse shall roar:
> The Sun shall seize the black Coach of the Moon,

[29] See Walter G. Bell, The Great Fire of London in 1666 (London, 1920), pp. 17–20; and the fuller discussion by Edward N. Hooker, "The Purpose of Dryden's Annus Mirabilis," Huntington Library Quarterly, X (1946–7), 49–67.

[30] See the references under Note 23, above.

[31] Walter C. Curry, Shakespeare's Philosophic Patterns (Baton Rouge, 1937), p. 243.

[32] The Tempest, IV, i, 151–56. According to John Middleton Murry, these lines may be safely said to represent Shakespeare's own thought insofar as they are "dramatically irrelevant" (Discoveries [London, 1924], p. 27).

And make it midnight when it should be noon:
With rusty Mask the Heav'ns shall hide their face,
The Stars shall fall, and all away shall passe:
Disorder, Dread, Horror, and Death shall come,
Noise, Storms, and Darkness shall usurp the roome.
And then the Chief-Chief-Justice, venging Wrath. . .
Shall make a Bon-fire of this mighty Ball.[33]

Milton's formulation of the orthodox point of view follows similar lines. On the Day of the Lord, according to his youthful version,

to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakefull trump of doom must thunder through the deep.
With such horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang
While the red fire, and smouldring clouds out brake:
The aged Earth agast
With terrour of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the center shake;
When at the worlds last session,
The dreadfull Judge in middle Air shall spread his throne.
And then at last our bliss
Full and perfet is.[34]

For thoroughness, however, we must turn to the maturer account in Paradise Lost, where the Father thus magnificently addresses His Filial Similitude:

thou attended gloriously from Heav'n
Shalt in the Skie appear, and from thee send
The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaime
Thy dread Tribunal: forthwith from all Windes
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past Ages to the general Doom
Shall hast'n, such a peal shall rouse thir sleepe.
Then all thy Saints assembl'd, thou shalt judge

[33] Divine Weekes and Workes, 1st Week, 1st Day, ll. 392–408; trans. Joshua Sylvester (1605). For another poetic version of the Last Judgment, see William Drummond of Hawthornden, Flowres of Sion (Edinburgh, 1630), pp. 56–61. A standard prose exposition of the orthodox viewpoint will be found in Johann Wolleb, The Abridgment of Christian Doctrine, trans. Alexander Ross (London, 1650), Ch. XXXIV–XXXVI.

[34] Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity, ll. 155–66.

> Bad men and Angels, they arraigned shall sink,
> Beneath thy Sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
> Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
> The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring
> New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
> And after all thir tribulations long
> See gold'n days, fruitful of gold'n deeds,
> With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.
> Then thou thy regal Scepter shalt lay by,
> For regal Scepter then no more shall need,
> God shall be All in All.[35]

Milton's description of the Son as the "dreadfull Judge" and of the Last Tribunal as "dread" is one of the commonplaces of Renaissance thought. The Day of the Lord, the Catholic Robert Southwell similarly pointed out, will be a "dreadfull daye," with the Son of God appearing in "furious wrath"; [36] for as Latimer explained, the event will mark "the day of great vengeance" against the wicked and the sinful.[37] "This *Lambe of God* therefore," wrote George Hakewill, "shall then shew himselfe as a *Lyon*, he shall then put on righteousnesse for a breast-plate, & take true judgment in steed of an helmet, then shall he put on the garments of vengeance for cloathing, & be clad with zeale as with a cloake; Then shall hee come in strength as a storme of haile, & as a whirlewinde breaking and throwing downe whatsoeuer standeth in his way, as a rage of many waters that flow and rush together. The mountaines shall melt & fly away at his presence, a burning fire shall run before him, and on euery side of him a violent tempest." [38] But most commentators did not stress only the wrath of God; concurrently they emphasized the glory that is to be revealed on the Last Day. As we read in Paradise Lost, the Son will

[35] Paradise Lost, III, 323–41. The recurrence of the word 'all' here is not accidental; as William Empson has pointed out (The Structure of Complex Words [London, 1951], pp. 101–4), Milton uses it only in significant passages in the epic.

[36] A Foure-Fold Meditation of the Foure Last Things (London, 1606), XL, 1, and XLVIII, 2, resp. Cf. Sir John Hayward, The Sanctuarie of a Troubled Soule (London, 1616), I, 77.

[37] Fruitfull Sermons (London, 1635), fol. 49. Cf. Lewis Bayly, The Practice of Pietie, 30th edn. (London, 1632), p. 95.

[38] An Apologie (Oxford, 1627), p. 458.

be reveald
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted World.[39]

But not only has this literalistic view of the Day of the Lord undergone a drastic alteration since Milton's time; another change occurred in connection with the universal resurrection of the dead to judgment, particularly as regards the nature of the bodies of the saints who are, subsequent to the last tribunal, to inherit the Kingdom of God. When the trumpet sounds, William Perkins affirmed, "the liuing shall be changed in the twinckling of an eye, and the dead shal rise againe euerie one with his owne bodie, and all shall be gathered together before Christ" to be sentenced.[40] Those living at the time, in other words, will undergo an alteration of their physical structure, this mutation being "in steed of death," [41] a transformation "from corruption into incorruption, from mortallity to immortallity, from despising into glory." [42] The dead, on the other hand, will be resurrected by a literal union of their souls with the very bodies they owned while on earth. This orthodox view during the Renaissance was phrased by the Puritan divine Richard Sibbes as follows: "As the same Body wherein *Christ* was spit upon, and mangled, and crucified, in the same Body he rose againe, and in the same Body ascended into Heaven; so it shall be with us: the same body tnat suffers any thing for *Christ*, the same body that dies, the same Body shall rise, and be assumed to glory." [43] While modern apologists do not deny that Jesus ascended into Heaven in the physical frame He had while on earth, they are of the general opinion as regards mankind that "the flesh

[39] Paradise Lost, XII, 545–47 (my italics). The glory and the terror of the Last Judgment are also jointly discussed by Milton in his theological treatise, Works, XVI, 347–49.

[40] The Foundation of Christian Religion (London, 1591), sig. $C4^1$. It must be understood that the souls of those dead during the Last Judgment were either in hell or in Heaven; mortalism and its related form, psychopannychism, though widespread during the Renaissance, were denounced by orthodox circles. See the studies by George Williamson, "Milton and the Mortalist Heresy," Studies in Philology, XXXII (1935), 553 ff.; George N. Conklin, Biblical Criticism and Heresy in Milton (New York, 1949), pp. 83 ff.; and C. A. Patrides, "Paradise Lost and the Mortalist Heresy," Notes and Queries, New Series, IV (1957), 250–51.

[41] William Perkins, A Golden Chaine (London, 1591), sig. $S5^1$.

[42] John Gardiner, A Briefe and Cleare Confession of the Christian Faith (London, 1579), fol. 20.

[43] Light from Heaven (London, 1638), I, 187–88.

will not rise again." [44] In accordance with the traditional Christian viewpoint, it is conceded that life in the post-conflagration world will be in the form of an embodied spirit rather than of a discarnate soul; concurrently, however, there is a marked unwillingness to speculate on the nature of the resurrected body beyond an agreement with St. Paul that it is to be a "spiritual body." [45] But this body, however it may be conceived, will not be the same as that owned at present. Indeed, the commission on Christian doctrine appointed in 1922 by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York resolved that "we ought to reject quite frankly the literalistic belief in a future resuscitation of the actual physical frame which is laid in the tomb." [46] Likewise, in the words of Dr. Walter R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, "we cannot suppose that the material particles of our present bodies will be collected together at the last day." [47] In direct contrast, however, here is the eloquent statement of another Dean of St. Paul's, John Donne:

> Where be all the splinters of that Bone, which a shot hath shivered and scattered in the Ayre? Where be all the Atoms of that flesh, which a *Corrasive* hath eat away, or a *Consumption* hath breath'd, and exhal'd away from our arms, and other Limbs? In what wrinkle, in what furrow, in what bowel of the earth, ly all the graines of the ashes of a body burnt a thousand years since? In what corner, in what ventricle of the sea, lies all the jelly of a Body drowned in the *generall flood*? What cohærence, what sympathy, what dependence maintaines any relation, any correspondence, between that arm that was lost in Europe, and that legge that was lost in Afrique or Asia, scores of yeers between? One humour of our dead body produces worms, and those worms suck and exhaust all other humour, and then all dies, and all dries, and molders into dust, and that dust is blowen into the River & that puddled water tumbled into the sea, and that ebs and flows in infinite revolutions, and still, still God knows

[44] Emil Brunner, Eternal Hope, trans. Harold Knight (London, 1954), p. 149.

[45] 1 Corinthians 15:44. For an exposition of the Pauline thesis, see E. C. Rust, The Christian Understanding of History (London, 1947), pp. 171–2. Cf. Edwyn Bevan, The Hope of the World to Come (London, 1930), pp. 53–57; and the fuller discussion by John M. Shaw, Life After Death (Toronto, 1946), Ch. IV–VII, and Christian Doctrine (London, 1953), Ch. XXIII–XXIV.

[46] Doctrine in the Church of England (London, 1938), p. 208.

[47] The Hope of Immortality (London, 1936), p. 66. Cf. Leslie D. Weatherhead, The Resurrection and the Life (London, 1948), Appendix; and Oscar D. Hardman, The Resurrection of the Body (London, 1934).

> in what *Cabinet* every *seed-Pearle* lies, in what part of the world every graine of every mans dust lies; and, *sibilat populum suum*, (as his Prophet speaks in another case) he whispers, he hisses, he beckens for the bodies of his Saints, and in the twinckling of an eye, that body that was scattered over all the elements, is sate down at the right hand of God, in a glorious resurrection.[48]

This outlook is at present regarded as "superstition";[49] and yet there is a strong current of belief discernible throughout the development of Christian theology that maintains the literal resurrection of the body.[50] This belief is expounded in the Athanasian Creed, while in an attempt to counteract Gnostic tendencies the Apostles' Creed went even further with its advancement of a claim for the resurrection of the flesh (*carnis*). Among the early Fathers who supported this view were Origen, Tertullian, Jerome, and Augustine, the latter observing that "far be it from us to think God's power insufficient to re-collect and unite every atom of the body, were it burnt, or torn by beasts, or fallen into dust, or dissolved into moisture, or exhaled into air."[51] It was in accordance with this spirit that Perkins affirmed during the reign of Elizabeth I that at the blast of the trumpet the long-deceased elect "shall arise with their bodies: and those very bodies, which were turned to dust, and one part rent from another, shall by the omnipotent power of God, be restored, and the soules of them shall descend from heauen, and bee brought againe into those bodies."[52] Elnathan Parr, in an exposition of the Anglican view, realized that the literal resurrection of the dead may be somewhat difficult to believe. But, he pointed out, "though this seeme unpossible to reason, yet it is not so to our Faith: whereby, considering the power of God, we know, that he is able to restore the body, though burnt to ashes, devoured by wilde beasts, or turned

[48] Fifty Sermons (London, 1649), p. 3. See also the pertinent passages collected by Michael F. Moloney, John Donne: His Flight from Mediaevalism (Urbana, 1944), pp. 116–18.

[49] Sir Oliver Lodge, quoted by Leslie D. Weatherhead, After Death (London, 1923), p. 43.

[50] Cf. the typical affirmation of the 11th council of Toledo in 675 pertaining to "a true bodily resurrection of all the dead" (The Church Teaches, ed. John F. Clarkson et al. [St. Louis, 1955], p. 346).

[51] De Civitate Dei, XII, 20; trans. John Healey, revised by R. V. G. Tasker.

[52] A Golden Chaine (London, 1591), sig. $S5^{1}$.

to dust, as he was able to create them, and all the world of nothing in the beginning: And this the Justice of GOD requires; namely, that that body which sinned, should bee punished, and not another, and that that body which hath been tortured heere for the profession of his Name, should be crowned with glory at the last day." [53] Sir Thomas Browne concurred: "I beleeve that our estranged and divided ashes shall unite againe; that our separated dust after so many pilgrimages and transformations into the parts of mineralls, Plants, Animals, Elements, shall at the voyce of God returne into their primitive shapes, and joyne againe to make up their primary and predestinated formes." [54] Sir Kenelm Digby, commenting on Browne's formulation, further pointed out that "if we will be Christians, and rely upon Gods promises, wee must beleeve that we shall rise againe with the same Body, that walked about, did eate, drinke, and live here on earth." [55] Finally, one of the great Biblical commentators of the Renaissance, Hieronymus Zanchius, was quite militant in his approach, issuing a flat condemnation of all "who fancied we shall not have the same, but other new bodies." [56]

The literal acceptance of the resurrection of the flesh by the orthodox thinkers of the Renaissance is paralleled by their affirmation of a cosmic conflagration that is to precede what Milton called the "perfection and consummation" of all things in God.[57] In this, Christianity perpetuated the eschatology of the Old Testa-

[53] The Grounds of Divinitie, 2nd edn. (London, 1615), p. 281.

[54] Religio Medici (Cambridge, 1955), p. 62. For similar statements see Richard Baxter, The Saints Everlasting Rest, 11th edn. (London, 1677), pp. 45–51; Lewis Bayly, The Practice of Pietie, 30th edn. (London, 1632), p. 119; John Ball, A Short Treatise: Contayning all the Principall Grounds of Christian Religion, 7th impr. (London, 1629), p. 242; Nicholas Byfield, Exposition upon . . . Collossians (London, 1628), III, 19; Nicholas Gibbens, Questions and Disputations (London, 1602), p. 228; Sir Francis Bacon, The Confession of Faith (London, 1641), p. 11; George Webbe, A Posie of Spiritual Flowers (London, 1610), p. 195; Milton, Works, XVI, 349–53; William Drummond of Hawthornden, A Cypresse Grove, annexed to Flowres of Sion (Edinburgh, 1630), p. 100; Archibald Simson, Heptameron (St. Andrews, 1621), p. 79; and the fuller discussion by Alexander Gill, The Sacred Philosophy of Holy Scripture (London, 1635), Ch. XXXVIII. Cf. The Westminster Confession of Faith, XXXII, ii.

[55] Observations upon Religio Medici (London, 1643), pp. 78–79.

[56] The Whole Body of Christian Religion, trans. Ralph Winterton (London, 1659), p. 391.

[57] De Doctrina Christiana, in Works, XVI, 367.

ment.[58] As the second Petrine epistle reiterates the older tradition, the heavens and the earth are "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment," when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works therein shall be burned up." [59] In accepting this view literally, the thinkers of the Renaissance had distinguished predecessors: St. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, in his lengthy exposition of the subject, concluded that the nature of the ultimate fire will be identical to our elemental fire [60] — a view which was so fully accepted by the Renaissance as to have Nathaniel Holmes declare flatly that he knew of "no Dispute among the Learned, but 'tis agreed on all hands, that Physical, natural, material fire is here to be understood." [61] But a millenium before St. Thomas the literalness of the final conflagration was also emphasized by St. Augustine's reference to another event in history: the world, he declared, will "lose its form by worldly fire, as it was formerly destroyed by worldly water." [62] This was likewise the point made by John Harvey during the Renaissance: "as we assuredly know that the world had once his extreame *κατακλυσμὸς*, or watrie winter, at *Noahes* floud; so do we no lesse stedfastly beleeue that there shall once likewise be *πύρωσις κόσμου*, whereby it shall feele as extream a fierie sommer with burning flames, and brimstone from heauen, utterly consuming, and wasting euerie part, and parcell thereof." [63]

But it is Milton who is the most distinguished expositor of the literalistic belief in the conflagration of the universe. His first formulation of the accepted views was in an academic exercise,[64] but the detached statement of his greener days was replaced later in life by a stronger conviction. In Paradise Lost the concept appears in key passages: besides the aforequoted speech of the

[58] See Psalm 102:26 and Isaiah 65:17.

[59] 2 Peter 3:7, 10. In addition to Biblical references, Renaissance commentators usually cited Ovid (Metamorphoses, I, 256–58). See John Dove, A Confutation of Atheisme (London, 1605), pp. 94–95, where Ovid's view of the world's end by fire is supported with quotations from Lucretius and Lucan.

[60] Summa Theologica, III, lxxiv, 3.

[61] The Resurrection-Revealed (London, 1661), pp. 26–27.

[62] De Civitate Dei, XX, 16.

[63] A Discoursive Probleme Concerning Prophesies (London, 1588), p. 31. For a full exposition of the final conflagration, see Henry More, The Grand Mystery of Godliness (London, 1660), Bk. VI, Ch. I–X.

[64] Naturam non pati senium, 11. 65–69.

Father in Book III,[65] after the Fall of Man it is again prophesied that "Heav'n and Earth renewd shall be made pure," [66] the angelic choir further affirms that "New Heav'n and Earth shall to the Ages rise" purified by the Son,[67] the Father re-iterates His promise of a future "Heav'n and Earth renewd," [68] and Michael informs Adam and Eve that at the second fulness of time

> fire [will] purge all things new,
> Both Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell.[69]

These lines conclude Book XI; a fact all the more significant in that what are now Books XI and XII were joined in the first edition of Paradise Lost (1667), but were separated at this point in 1674. Milton, indeed, leaves no doubt about his literal belief in the termination of universal history by fire: Michael, interestingly enough, returns to the concept on two more occasions. As the epic draws to its close, he foretells that Heaven and earth will be purified and fused into one whole:

> the Earth
> Shall all be Paradise, farr happier place
> Then this of Eden, and farr happier daies.[70]

The Son, he affirms later on, will set fire to the universe and will raise

> From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refined,
> New Heav'ns, new Earth, Ages of endless date,
> Founded in Righteousness and Peace and Love,
> To bring forth fruits Joy and eternall Bliss.[71]

"He ended"; and thus indeed ends history.

The theory of Christ's millenarian reign upon earth, albeit considerably diffused during the Renaissance, was rejected by the orthodox apologists of the faith; nor is it necessary for us to dwell here on either side of the idea since even Joseph Hall, who

[65] See above, p. 176.
[66] Paradise Lost, X, 638.
[67] Ibid., X, 647.
[68] Ibid., XI, 66.
[69] Ibid., XI, 900–1.
[70] Ibid., XII, 463–65.
[71] Ibid., XII, 548–51.

wrote a substantial book to refute it, thought that it was not "so deadly and pernicious in it selfe, as to make shipwrack of their own or others faith." [72] Moving past the end of history, therefore, we come to the beginning of eternity. Then, according to the last extant stanza of the Faerie Queene,

> no change shall be,
> But steadfast rest of all things, firmely stayd
> Upon the pillours of eternity . . .
> . . . thence-forth all shall rest eternally
> With Him that is the God of Sabbaoth hight.

In Milton's parallel statement,

> long Eternity shall greet our bliss
> With an individual kiss;
> And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
> When every thing that is sincerely good
> And perfectly divine,
> With Truth, and Peace, and Love shall ever shine
> About the supreme Throne.[73]

But this prospect has not always been received enthusiastically; not long ago, in fact, an astronomer described it as "an eternity of frustration." [74] What has been overlooked, of course, is the fact of our linguistic limitations to set forth a state that passes understanding; assuredly, at any rate, the capacity for knowledge will be expanded to such an extent that even the most dedicated astronomers will not feel out of place. "Our understandings," as the widely respected and popular Robert Bolton wrote in 1632, will

[72] The Revelation Unrevealed. Concerning the Thousand-Yeares Reigne of the Saints with Christ upon Earth (London, 1650), p. 6. For a defense of chiliasm, see Holmes' work (a reply to Hall) cited above, Note 61. The present brief study cannot, of course, do justice to the great number of 17th century apocalyptic books interpreting current history on the basis especially of Daniel and/or the Johannine Revelation; nor is it possible to consider here the widespread millennialism of the Renaissance, which cannot be fully appreciated but in relation to earlier thought. For one of the most noteworthy recent attempts to clarify this complicated subject, see Ernest L. Tuveson, Millennium and Utopia (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1949). For an extensive bibliography, see Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium (Fairlawn, N.J., 1957), pp. 430–62.

[73] On Time, 11. 11–17.

[74] Fred Hoyle, The Nature of the Universe (New York, 1950), p. 141. But see the devastating reply by Leslie D. Weatherhead, Really, Mr. Hoyle! (London, 1951).

be "supernaturally irradiated and illightened with extraordinary enlargment and divinesse." [75]

According to Renaissance thought, the glorified elect will be endowed during their eternal life with certain physical and spiritual privileges. Physically, it was thought, the bodies of the blessed will be distinguished by four qualities or properties. These are, according to Richard Sheldon's summary statement, *"Impassibilitie, Subtillity, Agility, Clarity: Impassibilitie* whereby the body is made uncapable of any contrary passion, or violent impression: *Subtillity*, whereby the body is made not a Spirit, but like unto a *Spirit*, to bee able to penetrate, or passe where it could not before: *Agility*, whereby it is indewed with such a velocity and Swiftnes, that the *beatified* may followe the *Lambe* whithersoever *he goeth: Clarity*, whereby al deformitie, or naturall *obscurenesse* being taken away, *the body* becomes *bright*, shining and resplendent." [76] As for spiritual privileges, Donne informs us that "The endowments of the blessed, (those which the School calls *Dotes beatorum*) are ordinarily delivered to be these three, *Visio, Dilectio, Fruitio*, The sight of God, the love of God, and the fruition, the injoyning, the possessing of God." [77] But past such general comments the apologists of the Renaissance were at a loss to describe the eternal life of the elect. Usually, as was to be expected, they turned to the Johannine Apocalypse and, gathering details from its various chapters, attempted to give a composite picture of the life to come. When all was said, however, they were wont to end their presentations with a confession analogous to Adam's in Paradise Lost, that all human thoughts come short of the attainment of the height and depth of God's eternal ways.[78] It was thus, for instance, that Bishop John Woolton concluded

[75] Of the Foure Last Things, 4th edn. (London, 1639), p. 114; first published in 1632. For parallel observations, see Sir John Hayward, The Sanctuarie of a Troubled Soule (London, 1616), I, 285–6; Robert Boyle, in D. C. Allen, The Legend of Noah (Urbana, 1949), pp. 27–28; and esp. Sir Kenelm Digby, Two Treatises (London, 1644), pp. 434 ff.

[76] Mans Last End (London, 1634), p. 70. Sheldon goes on to analyze each quality in detail. For an analogous discussion, see Joseph Hall, The Invisible World (London, 1659), Bk. II, Ch. VIII, "The reunion of the body to the soul both glorified."

[77] LXXX Sermons (London, 1640), p. 266.

[78] P.L., VIII, 412–14.

one of his works,[79] after having dwelt at length upon the state of blessedness as "offred to S. Iohn in a vision":

> The image of true felicitie which we couet & desire, is after a sort represented vnto vs in this description: which albeit it doth not, nor can not liuely & perfectly expresse the same: yet it is proposed both to stirre vs vp to an earnest desire thereof, and to kindle in vs an ardent loue of pietie and all other heauenly vertues: vntill vve haue runne out our race in this life, & do come vnto the goale or garland of promised felicitie, which is so incomprehensible to all humaine speeche, penne, and cogitation, that the Apostle in the declaration therof, findeth in him selfe some defecte and vvante: and therfor repeteth oute of the Prophet, *The eye hath not seene, the eare hath not heard, neither hath the hart of man conceyued those Ioyes, vvhiche God hath prepared for those that loue him.*[80]

[79] A Newe Anatomie of Whole Man (London, 1576), fol. 52[v].
[80] 1 Corinthians 2:9. Cf. Isaiah 64:4.

A MISINTERPRETED *NOMEN SACRUM* IN P^9

The Oxyrhynchus Papyrus fragment 402 (Greg. P^9) is located in the Semitic Museum of Harvard University. Its text is transcribed by Grenfell and Hunt in Oxyrhynchus Papyri III, pp. 2–3.

In their transcription of this papyrus, Grenfell and Hunt have apparently misinterpreted an abbreviation. In I John 4:16, for ἣν ἔχει ὁ θεὸς the editors give the text of P^9 as ην εχι ο $\overline{\chi\theta\varsigma}$. In an explanatory note they state that the scribe mixed up the abbreviations for Christ and for God. Presumably they mean that the scribe began to write $\overline{\chi\varsigma}$, but after writing the first letter he continued with $\overline{\theta\varsigma}$, resulting in the form $\overline{\chi\theta\varsigma}$.

Examination of a photograph of this papyrus indicates that the abbreviation is almost certainly the three-letter abbreviation for Christ, $\overline{\chi\rho\varsigma}$, a reading for which the critical editions record no other support. The abbreviation itself is not unusual; as a matter of fact, it is found four times in ten lines of another Harvard papyrus, P^{10}, which contains Rom. 1:1–7.

There is a mark, perhaps a slip of the pen, at the right side of the ρ[1] which has caused this letter to be taken for a θ. It does not, however, make the kind of θ which is found elsewhere in the manuscript. Moreover, there is no indication that the scribe intended to delete the χ.

This reading may not be textually significant, since there are other irregularities in the text of this fragment. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the text of P^9 is ην εχι ο $\overline{\chi\rho\varsigma}$ — i.e., ἣν ἔχει ὁ χριστὸς.

J. Harold Greenlee

Asbury Theological Seminary,
Wilmore, Kentucky

[1] The late Prof. Robert H. Pfeiffer, Curator of Harvard's Semitic Museum, kindly examined the papyrus itself and confirmed this observation.

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